Dear Friends, Colleagues, and Supporters of CREES,

It is a true pleasure to greet you as your new Director. Although many have seen me act in this capacity since Fall 2012, my official duties as CREES Director begin this term. My partner and I welcomed a baby boy in September 2013, and I performed selected instructional and administrative responsibilities during the Fall semester. Thanks to the exemplary work of CREES staff, who went above and beyond their regular assignments to ensure the smooth functioning of the Center, no one perhaps even noticed this transition. I thank Marsha Haufler, Associate Dean for International & Interdisciplinary Studies, for serving as CREES Acting Director for Fall 2013.

Even though we tried to schedule fewer events for Fall 2013 with my status in mind, we still managed to enjoy another semester full of large-scale events, terrific brownbag talks and popular movie nights. The term began with a well-attended annual Fall Mixer, immediately followed by the cross-curricular educator workshop “Tactile Turkey.” A part of the Lied Center’s Caravanserai Project, the workshop attracted 79 teachers, students, and community members, one of the largest attendance records in the history of CREES teacher workshops. In October, CREES took part in the International Area Studies Film Festival dedicated to this year’s NRC theme of Peace and Conflict. We were honored to host Ambassador Victor Jackovich, the first US ambassador to Bosnia & Herzegovina, who introduced the final film in the Peace & Conflict Series, No Man’s Land, and gave a series of talks at KU. And for our annual Palij Lecture, we hosted renowned Ukrainian writer Yury Vynnychuk. I want to especially thank new-to-KU Professor Vitaly Chernetsky for making the connection and arranging for Vynnychuk’s visit.

At the end of the Fall semester, REES faculty approved changes to the MA portfolio. A new addition features a reading journal that will allow REES MA students and their language instructors to monitor and assess progress in students’ target language acquisition.

We had great success with the first CREES Photo Contest. Faculty and students submitted 93 photographs from all parts of REES region. The top 20 photos were viewed by 1,378 unique viewers, and 5 winners were awarded prizes at the annual CREES Holiday Party at the Runaway Pony B&B. Congratulations to Geography PhD student Austin Charron for the winning photo, “Old Man and the Aral Sea.”

The photo contest revealed the varied and exciting experiences of our students overseas. Interested in sharing with the rest of the CREES community how these students benefited from experiential learning professionally, academically, and personally, we decided to dedicate the feature article of the Spring 2014 CREES Newsletter to personal accounts of 5 REES-affiliated KU students. Also inside the newsletter you will find a detailed announcement for course grant competitions, snapshots of the great fun we had learning over the past semester, and a special thank you to retiring Political Science Professor Ronald Francisco.

Looking forward to the Spring 2014 semester, I would like to draw your attention to the events listing, which spotlights several unique events. On January 28-29, CREES will host Sean McMeekin, Professor of History at Koc University, Turkey. Brought to KU by the Hall Center for the Humanities, Professor McMeekin will talk about his recent book July 1914: Countdown to War. CREES continues to be heavily involved with the KU WWI Centennial Commemoration Planning Group, chaired by Professor Lorie Vanchena. History Professor Nathan Wood will present a lecture, “All for you, Franz? From the Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand to Total War,” April 3, 7:30 pm, at the Spencer Museum of Art. Following his talk there will be a reception and chance to view the Spencer’s collection of WWI art. There will be many more activities as the WWI centennial commemoration period 2014-2018 progresses, and we will keep you posted as these activities develop.

In March, we expect numerous national and international visitors to come to KU and participate in our annual security conference. This year, the conference title is “From Köprü (Bridge) to Merkez (Center): Turkey’s Regional and Global Impact.” For more information and to register go to crees.ku.edu.

Take a note of change in the location of our annual Spring Festival. Scheduled for Sunday, March 9th, the Spring Festival will take place in the Carnegie Building in Downtown Lawrence.

We will end the semester with a South Slavic Film Festival at the end of April, hosted by Professor Tamara Falicov in KU’s Film and Media Studies Department.

No matter whether we've heard from you recently or not, please keep your news flowing this way. It’s so important for us to acknowledge the many activities and successes accomplished by our faculty and students. We look forward to hearing from you!
2013 PHOTO CONTEST TOP 5 WINNERS

3. “Shepherd,” by Cody Case, GAP Program Coordinator.
4. “Two girls going to the Latvian Song Festival,” by Laura Dean, Political Science PhD student.
5. “Window to Dubrovnik Summer,” by George Jerkovich, KU School of Medicine-Salina.

Check out the new CREES Flickr account! www.flickr.com/photos/kucrees
CREES COURSE DEVELOPMENT COMPETITIONS

REES AREA STUDIES ONLINE COURSE

The Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies is pleased to announce an initiative designed to deepen CREES distance-learning capacity and strengthen KU online curriculum.

We invite proposals for developing a new online course with 25-100% course content related to REES region or transforming an existing REES-related course into an online/hybrid variant. We will also consider proposals for adding no less than 25% of REES-related content to an existing online course or for significant enhancement of an existing course with online materials.

Tenured, tenure-track professors and lecturers at KU are eligible to apply, and we welcome proposals from all fields. In particular, we invite course development proposals from faculty in the Schools of Law or Business.

CREES will fund one proposal in the amount of $1,500 & $500 fringe, payable as summer salary. In addition to financial compensation, the Center can offer Internet resources, videos, as well as advice from members of the REES faculty and staff.

Blackboard, other learning management systems, and faculty’s personal websites can be used for the online content.

All applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with KU Center for Online and Distance Learning http://codl.ku.edu/ the staff of which – instructional designers and eLearning support specialists – will provide a wide range of pedagogy and media expertise to help faculty envision and implement online courses.

To receive the grant, you must offer the course at least once within the next two academic years (and offer the course at least one additional time). After the course is taught, CREES requests a copy of the final syllabus, a summary of student evaluations, and a brief self-evaluation of the class.

Proposals should include:
1. A copy of CV.
2. A cover letter including a brief description of the course, the target student audience, and your plans for offering the course. It should specify whether you are proposing a new course or modification of an existing course and/or the nature of the online materials that will be created for the course enhancement.
3. The proposed course syllabus. If you are modifying an existing course, you should also include the current syllabus with comments detailing how you have added online REES content to the existing curriculum.
4. Proposals for creating a new online course should be accompanied by a letter from the department chair (an email will suffice) confirming the department’s commitment to offering the course at least once within the next two academic years.

Please send your proposals to Mariya Omelicheva, Director of Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies, 302 Bailey Hall, by 5 p.m., 1 April 2014. For more information, please contact the Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies, 785-864-4236 or crees@ku.edu.

ONLINE LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR LCTLs

The Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies is pleased to announce an initiative designed to strengthen CREES online language instruction and resources for advanced level maintenance in Less Commonly Taught Languages spoken in the REES region.

We invite proposals for developing online instructional resources and materials for teaching LCTLs. These can include, but are not limited to, audio materials, videos, text, digitized artifacts from the region, images, and interactive exercises for enhancing student learning.

CREES will fund one proposal in the amount of $1,500 & $500 fringe, payable as summer salary. In addition to financial compensation, the Center can offer Internet resources, videos, as well as advice from members of the REES faculty and staff.

Blackboard, other learning management systems, and faculty’s personal websites can be used for the online content.

Tenured, tenure-track professors and lecturers at KU are eligible to apply. All applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with KU Center for Online and Distance Learning http://codl.ku.edu/ the staff of which – instructional designers and eLearning support specialists – will provide a wide range of pedagogy and media expertise to help faculty envision and implement online courses.

To receive the grant, you must offer the course at least once within the next two academic years (and offer the course at least one additional time). After the course is taught, CREES requests a copy of the final syllabus, a summary of student evaluations, and a brief self-evaluation of the class.

Proposals should include:
1. A copy of CV.
2. A cover letter including a brief description of the online language materials and/or resources, the target student audience, and your plans for offering the course.
3. The proposed course syllabus with comments detailing how you have added online content to the existing curriculum.

DEADLINE: APRIL 1, 2014
KU places a high premium on preparing students for lifelong learning, leadership, and success. Energizing the educational environment is stated as the first goal of the University’s Bold Aspirations. Towards this goal, the new KU Core encourages experiential learning, which encompasses a variety of activities inviting students to apply classroom knowledge in real world situations. Well-planned, supervised and assessed experiences outside a traditional academic setting can promote interdisciplinary learning, civic engagement, career development, cultural awareness, leadership, and other professional and intellectual skills. All of these objectives are emphasized in the KU REES program. Consequently, the Center has always strived to identify, create, and promote experiential learning programs in the REES region.

For students in international and area studies programs like REES, experiential learning often comes in the form of field research, study abroad, or internship. And for many REES faculty and staff, two of the most frequently asked questions are: “What sorts of opportunities are out there for students and how do we pay for them?”

As many in our community know, getting from Kansas to the REES region can be logistically difficult and expensive. Yet, field experiences are vital to a well-rounded understanding of Russia, Eastern Europe and Eurasia. They can boost the marketability of KU graduates looking for REES-related positions in the highly competitive job market. Even in these tight budgetary times, there are multiple opportunities for our students to gain valuable experiential learning experiences, and with tools like the internet and social media, it is easier to find out about these opportunities than ever before.

But as always, students often pursue those opportunities that they learn about by word-of-mouth. A friend’s personal account of an overseas experience is sometimes more impactful than the most colorful ad. Having first-hand knowledge of the application process, funding sources, and various tips on writing the statement of purpose can be invaluable for a student who wishes to be successful in a competitive pool of candidates.

With this in mind, the Spring 2014 CREES Newsletter features 5 REES-affiliated KU students and their experiential learning. Written by students of different academic levels and regional interests, each personal account shares information about opportunities available to KU REES students seeking to engage more fully with the region. Learning that is considered “experiential” engages students intellectually, emotionally, creatively, and socially. It also includes possibilities for learning from students’ own successes and mistakes. This can be seen quite clearly as students talk about how their experiences have benefited their educational and career goals, and what they learned about themselves during the process.

The first story is written by Alexander Melin, a current Law student and REES MA alumnus. Alex received the CREES-AmCham Strategic Studies Internship to work in Georgia during Summer 2013. Next we hear from Natalie Cristin Perry, a REES Co-Major who was awarded an Academic Year FLAS to study in Russia AY 2012-13. Amanda Gress, a junior studying economics and political science, shares her experience with the Stanford-US Russia Program. Geography PhD student David Trimbach talks about his Fall 2013 dissertation research experience in Estonia. And we conclude with REESGO President and graduating REES MA student Emily Csinisi, who talks about her US State Department e-internship with the Embassy in Tajikistan, showing how students can engage with the region from the comfort of their own home in Kansas.

FEATURE ARTICLE: GLOBAL JAYHAWKS

CREES-AMCHAM STRATEGIC STUDIES INTERNSHIP

By Alexander Melin

My name is Alexander Melin. I was born and grew up in Garden City, Kansas. I am an alumnus of KU’s Department of Slavic Languages and Literature (BA ’06) and REES (MA ’08), and will graduate KU’s School of Law in May 2014. Following my first year of law school, I studied in Ufa, Russia on a Critical Language Scholarship, in addition to working at the Finney County Attorney’s Office. I have directly continued my close affiliation with CREES with my study of Ukrainian during my second and third years of law school and, most recently, as a recipient of the CREES-AmCham Georgia Strategic Studies Internship.

The CREES-AmCham Georgia Strategic Studies Internship afforded me the terrific opportunity to live, work, and research in the Republic of Georgia for 8 weeks during summer 2013 at The American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham), in Tbilisi, Georgia. This was made possible by generous financial support from a US Army grant, the Foreign Military Studies Office, and CREES Outreach Coordinator Adnenne Landry, who interned at AmCham in 2006 while she was a graduate student at Columbia University. She reconnected with Amy Denman, AmCham’s Executive Director, when she and CREES Director Dr. Omelicheva went to Georgia for a Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS) regional conference in Tbilisi in the summer of 2012, and the three of them collaborated on making this opportunity available for REES-affiliated KU students.

I submitted my application for the internship in Fall 2012. There was a competitive application process, and I am very thankful for being selected for the opportunity.

Working at AmCham was simply one of the most amazing and productive experiences of my life. It consisted of working on AmCham events and projects, writing and copy-editing its flagship business magazine, Investor.ge, and conducting legal research and analysis.

AmCham helped me to arrange the nuts and bolts of my housing, arrival, and orientation. In the first few days after my arrival, I assisted the staff at AmCham in setting up my office and acquiring the necessary work permits and cards. Working at AmCham is not only a great professional experience, but also a great cultural experience. I had the opportunity to visit Tbilisi’s historical sites, learn about the country’s history, and meet people from all different places and walks of life. I also had the opportunity to go on a trip to Mtskheta, a city about an hour outside Tbilisi, to see the ancient ruins of the temple.

Alex Melin overlooking Mtskheta, Georgia.
REES-affiliated student experiential learning

Alex Melin with Executive Director Amy Denman and AmCham staff.

up the joint AmCham-U.S. Embassy Independence Day celebration at the U.S. Embassy in Tbilisi, which featured the famous Maia Baratashvili singing the national anthem, a band playing blues and jazz, activities for children and families, traditional U.S. Independence day food, and fireworks. With a crowd of more than 800, it was a great way for Georgians and Americans to mingle and interact, and showcase the American holiday.

After the Independence Day picnic and celebration, AmCham’s Commercial Law and Tax Committee met and we discussed the legal issues I was intending to research. We eventually settled on topics of interest to the business community concerning per diem expenses, representational expenses, and charitable and grant-giving in the country. The topics, although legal in nature, are important indicators of and factors in Georgia’s economic and legal development and keys to its growth, and thus, overall stability and security. During the course of my research I met with accountants, lawyers, and others from the business community; the Georgian Young Lawyers Association; Transparency International; Civil Society Institute; Open Society Georgia Foundation; and Policy, Advocacy, Policy, Advocacy, and Civil Society Development in Georgia (G-PAC)/East West Management Institute (EWMI), among others.

AmCham put on other great events while I was in Tbilisi that I was lucky to be a part of, including a packed seminar on Georgia’s new labor code and a roundtable with Bridget Brink, Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy in Georgia and American and Georgian members of the Georgian business community.

I also took part in a workshop at the Diplomatic Training Center of Georgia on Commercial Diplomacy and World Trade—part of a multi-year assistance program between the United States in cooperation with Georgia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MOESD)—which featured training led by Manoj Desai, Principal Commercial Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Istanbul. I learned a lot about world trade, met Georgian diplomats, and had the opportunity to write an article about the experience for Investgorge.

My other activities at AmCham included editing the organization’s by-laws, copy-editing its Investgorge magazine (which, by the way, is truly a unique and valuable source of information about Georgia for casual tourists as well as businesspeople and even scholars), examining draft laws, and assisting in the hiring of a lawyer for a committee coordinator/legal analyst position. Since I left Georgia, I have continued to edit Investgorge as a distance copy-editor and published two more articles in it related to my legal research this summer.

But Georgia is not all work and no fun. On my free weekends I visited a number of locations that I will remember for the rest of my life: the famed Borjomi mineral water springs; Akhaltsikhe and Rabati fortress in the south in Samtske-Javakheti; subtropical Batumi and the Roman fort at Gonio on the Black Sea; ancient Mtskheta (whose monuments are considered a UNESCO world heritage site and include the oldest church in Georgia and the scenic Jvari Monastery); and the Vardzia Monastery and cave complex (former home of legendary Queen Tamar and one of the most breathtaking locations I have ever seen). Tbilisi itself was amazing, with buildings like its new presidential palace contrasting with the ruins of Narikala fortress and its multitude of cathedrals—the modern and ancient, side by side.

Tbilisi is a bustling city and there is always something interesting going on: I frequented the Nona Gaprindashvili Chess palace on occasion, playing chess with the locals; attended a bossa nova concert featuring none other than the Ambassador of Brazil to Georgia, who crooned to the First Lady of Georgia herself as part of celebrations marking twenty years of Brazilian-Georgian diplomatic relations; visited the city’s famous natural hot spring sulfur baths; and even rode a mechanical bull for the first time in my life—surprising for a native western Kansan—at Mtatsminda (Holy Mountain) Park.

And, of course, Georgia has its own unique and distinguished cuisine, featuring khachapuri (cheese breads, that may feature other ingredients like meat, eggs, and butter), khinkali (dumplings made of meat, potato, or mushrooms), lobio (a kind of delicious bean soup), its famous wine, chicken and walnut dishes, local fruits (including the first fresh figs I’ve ever eaten), fresh stream trout, and perhaps my favorite Georgian sweet, churchkhela (nuts threaded on a string, dipped in thickened juice, and dried into a portable snack).

There are Jayhawks everywhere. In Tbilisi I met KU REES alumna Bethany Owens (MA’10) who is currently a U.S. State Department employee and was working at the U.S. Embassy for the summer. I also met Michael Cowgill, head of Georgian American University, who received his master’s degree in engineering at KU.

The CREES-AmCham Strategic Studies Internship was truly a great opportunity and representative of the unique and useful opportunities that REES-affiliated students at KU may take advantage of. Again, I’d like to thank the Foreign Military Studies Office for financially supporting the opportunity. I hope many more KU students will be able to take advantage of the internship in the future.

“There are Jayhawks everywhere.”
By Natalie Cristin Perry

My name is Natalie Cristin Perry, and during the 2012-13 academic year, I had the opportunity to study in St. Petersburg, Russia and complete the requirements for my co-BA in Slavic Languages & Literature and Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies. I applied for multiple programs, but had identified the American Councils Russian Language and Area Studies program (ACTR: www.acrussiaabroad.org/?action=program&prog=RLASP) early on as being my top choice. The problem was—how to pay for it? American Councils is known for high quality programs, but their price tags can also be quite hefty.

I am so grateful I chose the American Councils RLASP program, primarily because of the diversity in experiences the program offered. Over the course of two semesters, I had the opportunity to travel the length of western Russia (over 1500 miles), witness harsh winter to tropical summer; and see Russian culture outside of the main capitals that I had never been exposed to before.

In St. Petersburg, every Wednesday our group would go see a museum, ballet opera, park, boat tour, or other cultural opportunities. In late April, our group travelled to Sochi, where the winter Olympics will be in February 2014. In the wonderful resort area around Sochi, we hiked, swam in waterfalls, and got to see dolphins swimming in the Black Sea.

My experience studying abroad gave me confidence in my education about Russian culture and language that I never expected at an undergraduate level. Studying in St. Petersburg with American Councils allowed me to complete my major; as well as complete almost all of the credits needed for a Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies (REES) co-major at KU. Because of the cultural and language immersion, weekly excursions, Russian language classes, wonderful host family, tutoring and opportunities to sit in on actual courses at Herzen University with regular Russian students, I will graduate in May 2014 with a whole host of international experiences to speak about when interviewing for jobs.

By Amanda Gress

I am Amanda Gress, a junior studying economics and political science. This fall I traveled to Moscow as a delegate to the Stanford U.S.-Russia Forum (SURF: www.joinsurf.com), a program designed to bring students from Russia and the United States together to discuss and research important issues in the bilateral relationship. The program is just entering its fifth year; and consists of twenty United States delegates, twenty Russian students, a team of Russian and American student officers, and an alumni network. After studying the history and society of Russia and Eurasia at KU and participating in policy debate, I knew that I would enjoy the opportunity to experience Russian culture firsthand. Fortunately, my REES 221: Societies & Cultures of Eurasia instructor, Bart Redford, informed me of this great opportunity to interact and research with other students interested in U.S.-Russian relations.

I arrived in Moscow in mid-October to participate in the opening conference, which lasted for five days. My fellow delegates quickly began showing my American colleagues and me around via the Metro and teaching us some basic phrases in Russian. We spent the daytimes in a traditional academic conference setting, where I particularly enjoyed engaging with Russian academics in discussions about cyber security, the international response to Syrian chemical weapons use, and the Russian response to the financial crisis. When the conference met at the Moscow School of International Relations and the Financial University, I saw firsthand what life is like on a Moscow university campus. When we visited the Skolkovo Innovation Center, we met with Russian entrepreneurs before attending a competition for Skolkovo students to seek funding from venture capitalists to launch their projects.

Each evening, I explored the city with my new Russian and American friends. I watched dazzling lights projected onto the Bolshoi Theatre, admired the reflections of New Moscow’s skyscrapers in the Moskva River, attempted to order food in Russian, and sipped beer in smoky local pubs. By Sunday morning, I couldn’t believe it was already time for me to leave.
Now, I am working with three other students on the next phase of the project. Sean, Dmitry, and I make up this year’s Nuclear Comprehensive Research Group, and we are in the process of writing and administering a survey to individuals working in the U.S. and Russian nuclear industries. We try to meet via Google Hangout about once a week, and we have the support of program alumni who are helping to guide our project. After our survey is complete we plan to compare industry outlooks to identify potential areas of cooperation. Over five days in mid-April, we’ll present our findings along with the other nine research teams at the final conference at Stanford, and our work will be published in the SURF Journal.

This year’s delegates, student officers, and alumni make up a fascinating group of people, and SURF is an unbelievable opportunity for interested students who want to better understand the U.S.-Russia relationship. It’s also very economically feasible. Private Russian sponsors and public U.S. grants make the program very affordable; participants are only responsible for the cost of their plane tickets, and there’s sometimes financial assistance for travel. The application is relatively straightforward and includes a statement of purpose, a short sample research proposal, and an interview for finalists. While a number of my fellow American delegates had studied Russian, no previous language study is necessary, and navigating Moscow with a group of Russian students is incredibly easy for a non-Russian speaker. The program is open to undergraduate and graduate students alike.

I’m certainly looking forward to the conference in April, because I’m interested to hear from individuals who are dedicated to examining the bilateral relationship, and to hear from the SURF’s other research groups. However, I’m especially looking forward to being reunited with this incredible group of students from both Russia and the United States.

**DISSERTATION FIELDWORK ABROAD**  
**By David Trimbach**

Tere! My name is David Trimbach and I am a PhD Candidate in the Department of Geography. I am also a former FLAS fellowship awardee, Russian-language student, and CREES Brownbag speaker. My research interests include citizenship geography, critical geopolitics, minority integration, and the greater Baltic region.

I spent the Fall 2013 semester conducting my dissertation fieldwork in Estonia, primarily in Estonia’s third largest city of Narva, which is situated along the Estonian-Russian border. My dissertation research addresses citizenship practices and perceptions of minority Russian-speakers in the Estonian-Russian borderland.

Narva is strikingly different from the Estonia that tourists typically experience while strolling through Tallinn’s beautiful Old Town. Narva is a Russian socio-linguistic enclave and often cited as an “Estonian Detroit” because of its post-Soviet industrial decline, high unemployment, and depressed urban landscape.

Although all public signs and advertisements are in the Estonian language and the Estonian and European Union flags can be seen fluttering throughout the city, many Narvans will tell you that you actually enter Estonia once you leave Narva’s city limits or venture beyond the limits of nearby Sillamäe (another Russian-speaking town).

This spatial understanding of Estonia is pronounced in Narva and continues to be a national integration issue for the Estonian government and plays a big role in my own research.

Narva often feels like another country entirely. Narva is not quite entirely Estonian or Russian, it is Narvan. I fortunately had the opportunity to conduct my fieldwork through Narva College (a regional branch campus of the University of Tartu), utilize their facilities, and feel part of their small academic community. This was my second trip to Estonia as a KU graduate student.
My name is Emily Csinsi and I am a graduate student in the REES program and currently the REEGO President. I am in my second year of graduate school and I expect to receive an MA in REES in May 2014. I currently have a Virtual Student Foreign Service e-Internship through the Department of State at an American Corner in Dushanbe, Tajikistan (www.state.gov/vsfs/). I learned about this opportunity from e-mails sent out by CREES. CREES Outreach Coordinator Adrienne Landry and CREES Assistant Director Bart Redford told all of the graduate students about the e-Internship program and also helped with the application process. I do believe that asking Bart to look over my statement of interest significantly strengthened my application and was one of the reasons I was ultimately chosen for the position. Thank you, Bart!

I applied for my e-Internship in July through usajobs.gov, had a phone interview in late August/early September, and began my e-Internship in September. My e-Internship runs through the academic year, and I am required to give at least two presentations per month and e-mail reports to my coordinator. I applied to “Promote cross-cultural awareness by developing content and programming (including web-chats) for American Corners in Tajikistan.” I do this by giving Skype presentations about American culture to English language learners and there are 8-12 American students who do the same thing at other locations in Tajikistan.

I knew I wanted an e-Internship in Russia or a former Soviet nation so my search process was narrowed. There were 276 possible VSFS e-Internships all over the world, with about 2/3rd being located in the US. Applicants were allowed to apply for up to three positions and could, theoretically, be interviewed and chosen for all three, but could only accept one.

Before applying, I had never heard of American Corners. They are joint partnerships between the Public Affairs sections of United States Embassies and host institutions, and function similarly to public libraries, but focus on providing information about the United States to foreign publics. American Corners have public lectures, cultural programming, access to English language learning materials, and computers that they offer for free to their patrons. American Corners are located all over the world and, in my opinion, promote positive, non-militarized views of the United States.

I have two main goals for my presentations: to provide cultural information about America and to allow students to practice their English. It has taken a little while for the students to feel comfortable talking to me, but they have recently begun to ask a lot of questions and tell me a lot about Tajikistan.

I was given nearly free rein on the subject matter of my presentations. The only limitation imposed is I am not allowed to talk about anything political. American Corners are supposed to be a non-political zone in an effort to show that the US is more than just our government. I have happily complied with this stipulation and the subject has not come up from students either. Previous presentations have been about my hometown, my undergraduate experience, how to apply for a Fulbright, wedding customs, and how to apply to American universities as a foreign student. I have noticed that most of my audience is especially interested in learning how to come to the US, but they also enjoy telling me things about Tajikistan and their culture. We just had a lively discussion about US and Tajik wedding customs that I learned a lot from. Learning from the audience is one of my favorite parts of this opportunity.

I feel very lucky to have been chosen for such an interesting and positive e-Internship, and I encourage current and future students to apply next year. For more information about American Corners in Dushanbe, see http://dushanbe.usembassy.gov/ac.html.
On Monday, March 3, 2014, experts from around the world will convene at KU to discuss the evolving role of Turkey in regional and global affairs.

While its international stature has been on the rise since the end of the Second World War, the nature of Turkey’s role in global affairs and its foreign policy directions continue to undergo considerable change.

During the Cold War, it was common to describe Turkey using the metaphors of “buffer” or “basion.” At the close of the 20th century, Turkish political elites began actively promoting an image of the country as a köprü or “bridge” between East and West, indicating its function as an intermediary between continents, cultures, and geopolitical spaces. After the accession of the Justice and Development Party to power, the new economically liberal and religiously conservative elite began referring to Turkey as a merkez or “center locale,” suggesting a place of significance in and of itself to which people come, rather than merely a space “in between.” This seemingly subtle discursive shift has been accompanied by increasingly pro-active Turkish public diplomacy, building on Turkey’s expanding soft power in the Balkans, Middle East, Caucasus and Central Asia. As Turkey engages new regions and actors and continues building relations with old allies, it develops new capacities in regional and global contexts.

Turkey’s role in regional and global affairs, in tandem with major historic developments including the global economic crisis and changes in the Middle East and North Africa following the Arab Spring, begs the question of the extent to which Turkey is a “game-changer” in the region and the world. The goal of this conference is to assess Turkey’s current role in regional and global contexts, its impact and foreign policy in relation to Middle Eastern nations, including Iran, Iraq, Syria and Israel, and its relations with Russia, the EU/Europe, China, and the US.

The conference will take place in Alderson Auditorium in the Kansas Union and is sponsored by CREES, the Center for Global & International Studies (CGGIS), and Middle East Studies at the University of Kansas. It is funded by a US Army Research grant.

SECURITY CONFERENCE: RETROSPECTIVE

For the past 5 years CREES has significantly benefited from a generous grant from the US Army Research Office. During that time we have co-sponsored numerous projects, the flagship being our annual security conference. At these conferences we have discussed: “Culture and Security in Central Asia” (April 2010); “Migration, Shadow Economies, and Security Issues on the World’s Borders” (April 2011); “Afghanistan 2014: Impacts on Global Security Identities” (April 2012); “Russia and China: The Architects of a New Global Order?” (April 2013); and now the final in our 5 year series, “Turkey’s Regional and Global Impact” (March 2014). As this grant concludes, CREES would like to take a moment to acknowledge our partners. While this phase of our collaboration may be winding down, we look forward to developing new projects with you and continuing our fine tradition of success.
On Nov. 18, 2014, celebrated Ukrainian writer Yuriy Vynnychuk, author of “Tango of Death,” delivered the Ukrainian Studies Fall 2013 Palij Lecture. “Tango of Death” was awarded the BBC Ukrainian Book of the Year prize, the most prestigious award in contemporary Ukrainian literature, in 2012. Another novel by Vynnychuk was named the first BBC Ukrainian Book of the Year in 2005. KU Professor Vitaly Chernetsky, a specialist in modern Slavic literatures and cultures and the current president of the American Association for Ukrainian Studies, describes Vynnychuk in his book *Mapping Postcommunist Cultures: Russia and Ukraine in the Context of Globalization* as practicing a “daringly transgressive and openly political form of magic realist writing.”

The CREES Palij Family Fund supports the annual visiting Palij Lecturer focusing on Ukrainian studies and provides the annual Ukrainian Studies Prize for an outstanding student specializing in Ukraine. University of Kansas also offers an intensive summer study abroad program focusing on Ukrainian language and culture in Lviv, Ukraine.

**Fall Semester Snaps**

- **Book Talk: “Catastrophe 1914”** with Sir Max Hastings. 13 November 2013
- **Musical Conversation with Lied Center Caravanserai artist Omar Faruk Tekbilek.** 24 September 2013
- **Tactile Turkey Teacher Workshop.** 28 September 2013
- **Outreach Coordinator Adrienne Landry at the Watkins Museum International Craft Fair.** 7 December 2013
- **Career Talk with Foreign Service Officer and SLL alumna Cassandra Payton.** 12 December 2013
- **Fall FMSO GRAs present research findings.** 10 December 2013
CREES FACULTY SERVICE

At the Sept. 6th 2013 CREES Fall Mixer, Associate Director Renee Perelmutter was pleased to award the 2013 CREES Faculty Service Award to Professor Marie-Alice L’Heureux. This award is given annually to a REES-affiliated faculty member who goes above and beyond in service to the Center. Prof. L’Heureux was acknowledged for her willingness to participate in CREES events and serve on CREES committees.

CREES HOLIDAY PARTY

13 December 2013

Throughout his government service, Ambassador Jackovich has specialized in launching new operations and leading them through their formative years. During the war in the Balkans, he opened the US embassy in Bosnia (1994) and spent the conflict years in Bosnia as the first US ambassador there (1992–1995). He was US ambassador to Slovenia (1995–1998) and helped that country’s early efforts to enter into NATO and the European Union. He headed the first US representation to the independent state of Moldova (1992), directed the Department of State’s Task Force on the Balkan Crisis (1990–1991), and led US delegations to international conferences on the Balkans in Geneva and elsewhere (1992–1993). He holds the Golden Eagle Award, conferred by the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina; the Serb Civic Society Award; and the Distinguished Civilian Service Award, conferred by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He left US government service in 2004 after 33 years, including 13 years at the rank of ambassador.

AMBASSADOR JACKOVICH VISITS KU

Ambassador Victor Jackovich, the first US ambassador to Bosnia & Herzegovina, gave a series of talks at KU on October 9-10, 2013. He first introduced the final film in the Peace & Conflict Film Series, No Man’s Land, visited KU classrooms, and then delivered a lecture entitled “The New Eastern Europe.”
BROWNBAG LECTURE SERIES

FALL 2013 HIGHLIGHTS

RUSSIAN SCIENCE: AN OUTSIDER’S VIEW FROM THE INSIDE

On September 3, 2013, KU Professor David Besson (Physics and Astronomy) talked about his experience as a “Leading Scientist” on a recent Russian Ministry of Education ‘mega-grant’ award, which will extend through the end of 2015. As part of this mega-grant, a group of KU students will be spending summers at the Moscow Engineering and Physics Institute during 2014 and 2015. Professor Besson also talked about the relationship between the Universities and the Russian Academy of Science, and Putin’s recent push to favor the latter over the former.

In Fall 2014, CREEES and Professor Besson will offer Honors course: The Russian Scientific Culture: Past, Present, and Future (1 credit seminar). Since the time of Lomonosov and Peter the Great, Russian science has developed with the same East-West dualism that has characterized Russian culture, as a whole. In this seminar, we will consider the development of Russian (and Soviet) science through the present, and the similarities and differences relative to the Western scientific tradition. Special attention will be given to the driving forces in the development of science and innovation by examining them in the context of Russia’s relations with the West. The seminar will emphasize the recent developments (including the take-over of the Russian Academy of Science, increasing adoption of US University-level practices and administration, re-allocation of the national science budget and priorities, etc.), and projections of how Russian science will develop in the future.

SERGEY SHOYGU: RUSSIA’S EMERGENCY DEFENSE MINISTER

On September 24, 2013, Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO) Senior Analyst and REES MA alumnus (’92) Raymond Finch presented on, “Sergey Shoigu: Russia’s Emergency Defense Minister.” His presentation briefly examined Shoigu’s background, the speculation behind his sudden appointment, the challenges he faces, his efforts thus far within the Defense Ministry, and possible future implications — both military and political — surrounding his selection as Russia’s chief military representative. A copy of a related paper can be found at: http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/Finch-Shoigu.pdf

CURRENT EVENTS IN TURKEY: MUCH ADO ABOUT A TURKISH MALL

On October 1, 2013, CGIS Assistant Director Mike Wuthrich gave a presentation on the Gezi Protests in Turkey at the end of May through the middle of June 2013. The presentation highlighted several aspects of the protest that had flown beneath the radar of news coverage. One aspect involved the popular misunderstanding of what was the grounds for protest — i.e. the removal of a green space; although many believed that the green space would be entirely removed to be replaced by a mall complex, the government’s intention for the space was to create (for commercial purposes) a replica of the Ottoman barracks that existed on the site decades earlier, and which would encapsulate and leave most of the green space intact. The other element of the protest discussed was the symbolic significance of the “Ottoman” element of the construction, which fed into the two major competing narratives on the historical foundations of the Turkish Republic. While the Ottoman past is fondly remembered and venerated by Turkish religious conservatives, Turkish secular nationalists believe Ottoman symbolism to be an attack on the modern and secular character of the Republic. The talk ended with a discussion of the political implications of the protest for Prime Minister Erdogan, his party, and future elections.
On October 8, 2013, Vitaly Chernetsky, who joined KU this semester as an Associate Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures, discussed the evolution of cinema in Ukraine from its beginnings in the early 20th century to the present, highlighting the ways in which the development of a cinematic tradition and construction of a national identity often worked hand-in-hand, and how aesthetic and social conformity of the Stalin era and the stagnation period of the 1970s challenged and undermined this process. His presentation drew on theoretical discussions of the concept of a national cinema and its relationship to national identity and explored the hallmarks of Ukrainian cinema, including the period of astonishing innovation and productivity in the second half of the 1920s and the flourishing of an innovative poetic cinema school during the 1960s—early 1970s that was later brutally crushed by the Soviet authorities. Chernetsky underscored that many of the masterpieces of Soviet cinema, including the signature films of Dovzhenko, Vertov, and Parajanov, can only be fully understood and appreciated when their Ukrainian context is taken into account. He concluded with an overview of the major developments in post-Soviet Ukrainian cinema and the efforts at re-conceptualizing the Ukrainian cinematic canon and making it better known internationally.

For over 30 years, the CREES Brownbag Lecture Series has been an informal forum for KU and the surrounding community to discuss general topics related to Russia, Eastern Europe and Eurasia.

Rather than address specific themes, each semester the lectures cover a variety of topics and areas, and are presented by academics, students, and professionals—anyone with an interesting specialty to share. From the arts and literature to political science and current events, the CREES Brownbag Lecture Series continues to educate and inform all those interested in this diverse and dynamic area of the world.

CREES Brownbags are free and open to the public. They are held every Tuesday at noon in 318 Bailey Hall. If you have a topic you would like to discuss or are interested in presenting, please contact:

Bart Redford
CREES Assistant Director
bredford@ku.edu
785-864-4248

LGBT issues in Russia

On November 20, 2013, KU Professors Eve Levin (History), Vitaly Chernetsky (Slavic Languages and Literatures), and Renee Perelmutter (Slavic Languages and Literatures and Jewish Studies) spoke on historical and cultural aspects of LGBT representation in Russia. This well-attended event attracted CREES affiliates, as well as the wider campus community interested in the new Russian anti-gay propaganda laws and the controversy surrounding the upcoming Winter Olympics in Sochi.

Prof. Levin showed that LGBT behavior has been present and acknowledged in pre-modern Russia; same-sex interactions were not considered more sinful than illicit heterosexual interactions. Rather than having an innate sexual orientation, people were expected to experience a range of attractions to the members of opposite and same sex. According to Western European travelogues, open homosexuality was both frequent and quite casual; homophobia might have come to Russia from the West.

Prof. Chernetsky continued the conversation by discussing a major shift from the focus on actions to a focus on identities, a shift that occurred during the 1860-70s in conjunction with the invention of the term “homosexuality.” Prof. Chernetsky surveyed recent scholarship focusing on LGBT issues in Russia, both within Russia and in the West; he also discussed important LGBT writers and activists such as Evgenij Khartonov, Yaroslav Mogutin, Masha Gessen, and others. Prof. Chernetsky spoke about the criminalization of homosexuality during the Soviet period, the decriminalization and growth of discourse in the post-Soviet era, and the legal persecution currently ongoing.

Finally, Prof. Perelmutter presented recent anti-LGBT legislative developments and their impact; she foregrounded discussions by and about ordinary queer-identified people, such as interviews in gay issues of Afisha and Colta.ru, and grassroots LGBT activism (especially online, through Livejournal.com blogs and the Russian Facebook equivalent Vkontakte).
Anna Cienciala (History Emerita) had 3 publications in 2013: “A Tribute to Andrzej Przewoznik on the Seventieth Anniversary of the Discovery of the Katyn Crime,” The Polish Review; “A Work that is Still the Authoritative Study Half a Century Later: On the Fiftieth Anniversary of Piotr Wandycz’s Book: France and her Eastern Allies 1919-1925; French-Czechoslovak-Polish Relations from the Paris Peace Conference to Locarno; Anglojęzyczni świadkowie Katynia; Najnowsze Badania English-Speaking Witnesses to Katyn, Recent Research by Krystyna Piorokowska.

Arienne Dwyer (Anthropology) won a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship, which she will use to produce a book, “Camel Spring Narratives and Meta-Narratives of the Silk Road,” which explores the stories told by and about Central Asians. She will analyze more than 150 fictional and historical oral texts by Central Asian tellers, as well as the narratives of early Western explorers and the modern Chinese state. The stories she has collected show how cultures and ethnic groups interacted along the eastern Silk Road across the past eight centuries. The study will fill a gap in the studies of Central Asian literature, culture, ethnic groups and history and will also appeal to general readers interested in the history and culture of Central Asia.

In October 2013 Marc L. Greenberg (SLL; Chair of Germanic Languages & Literatures) presented a paper with Zbynek Holub (Univ of Opava) entitled, “A Fixed Star is Born: Fixed Pitch-Stress in South-West Bohemia” at the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Slavic Linguistics Society, Szczecin University (Poland). At the same conference he was elected Chair of the Executive Board of the Slavic Linguistics Society, a post he will hold until the next conference in October 2014 at the University of Washington, Seattle. He continues to serve as Linguistics Editor for Slavia Centralis. He was also named to the Editorial Board of Вопросы ономастик (Russian Academy of Sciences). In Fall 2013 he was named Special Advisor to the Dean of the College to form the KU School of Slavic, Eurasian, and Eastern European Studies.

Shannon O’Lear (Geography) was the lead author on an article titled, “Environmental Security, Military Planning, and Civilian Research: The Case of Water,” which was published in the high-profile Environment in the September/October issue (available online at http://www.environmentmagazine.org/index.html). In the Spring she challenged a team of her PhD students – John Biersack, Nate Pickett, and Dave Trimbach – to develop a critique of the highly problematic but ever-popular work of Robert D. Kaplan by writing a book review of his latest piece, The Revenge Of Geography: What The Map Tells Us About Coming Conflicts And The Next American Empire. The group presented their work at the Political Geography preconference at UCLA in April, and their review was accepted for publication in Progress in Human Geography.

Mariya Y. Omelicheva (CREES Director; Pol Sci) was selected for the Open Society Institute’s International Fellowship Program to work with the Yerevan State Linguistic University After V. Brusov on Education Management and Planning for 2013-14 (declined). Her chapter “Central Asian Conceptions of Democracy: Ideological Resistance to International Democratization” appeared in the International Dimensions of Authoritarian Persistence in the Former Soviet Union, eds. Rachel Vanderhill and Michael E. Aleprete Jr. (Lexington Press); an article titled “Terrorism in Central Asia: Dynamics, Dimensions, and Sources” came out in the winter edition of Education About Asia; and a review “The Transformative Power of Deliberation: When Ethnic Protests Lead to Democratization” was published in International Studies Review. In September she also introduced the CREES community to its newest member – Vladimir Espinal, was born on September 3, 2013.

Renee Perelmutter (CREES Associate Director; Slavic Languages and Literatures) had a busy and productive Fall semester. In addition to teaching Yiddish and advising REES students, she continued to work on her monograph on Russian women’s discourse online. She completed and submitted an article on Russian women’s folklore online to a special issue of Western Folklore. Dr. Perelmutter also worked on two Jewish Studies projects this fall. The first project tackles the speech of Russian-speaking Israelis who immigrated to Israel after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The second project tackles discourse/ideology and the issues of queerness in I. Bashevis Singer’s famous short story Yentl the Yeshiva Boy. Dr. Perelmutter presented on this topic at the Jewish Studies Intellectual Community gathering. She also participated in a CREES brownbag discussion on LGBT issues in Russia with Professors Levin and Chemetovsky.

During the summer and fall, Norman Saul (History Emeritus) presented a brownbag on the United States and Russia during World War I. His chapter on “The United States and Russia in the Turmoil of War and Revolution, 1914-1918” is to be included in a volume on diplomacy in the Russian and World War I centennial series, to be published in 2014. He also presented “Russia and the American Civil War” for a History Department series at Wichita State University in September and spoke on behalf of the Kansas Humanities Council at the Valley Falls Historical Society on the “Millers of Kansas” in October. In November, sponsored by the American embassy, he participated in a conference in Moscow on “Changing Perceptions of Russia in the United States, 1933-2013;” with a paper entitled “The Program that Ended the Cold War: The Lacy-Zarubin (Eisenhower-Khrushchev) Agreement of 1958.” At the ASEEES meeting in Boston he presented a chapter on “The Second American Revolution and the Russian Fleet Visits of 1863: the 150th Anniversary” and participated in a roundtable on “Reinventing Area Studies: Amerikanistika in Russia, Russian Studies in America.” During the fall he also published book reviews in Journal of American Studies, Diplomatic History, and Kansas History.

At ASEEES in November Erik Scott (History) presented a paper entitled “Rooted Cosmopolitans: Ethnic Guests as Imperial Hosts in the Soviet Union.” In November, Bart Redford (CREES Assistant Director) presented his paper titled, “Kapitalizm: An In-Class Simulation of Shock Therapy in Post-Soviet States,” at an ASEEES panel on Revolution in the Classroom. Kapitalizm is a classroom simulation that Bart developed to help students in his courses better understand what economic transition meant for citizens in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. In October, Adrienne Landry (CREES Outreach Coordinator) presented on the activities of the KU WWI Centennial Commemoration Planning Committee at the Kansas Museums Association’s annual conference. She is also serving as a Senator on the Unclassified Senate, a governing body for Unclassified Professional Staff at the University of Kansas.

NEW REES FACULTY & STAFF

Esra (b. Kesici) Predolac has joined KU’s Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and CREES this fall as the new Turkish Language Instructor. Esra was born in Germany and grew up in both Germany and Turkey. She earned her BA from Hacettepe University in Ankara, Turkey, and arrived in the US in 2005 to pursue an MA in linguistics at Syracuse University. After gaining her MA degree, she started her PhD in linguistics at Cornell University. She is currently writing her dissertation, in which she investigates various syntactic phenomena pertaining to clausal complementation, focusing on Turkish. Her research interests include topics such as embedded root phenomena, parataxis, extraposition, nominalization, and second language acquisition. She has presented and published articles on issues in Turkish syntax. She has also co-edited the proceedings volume Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics 18 and is currently co-editing the Proceedings of the 9th Workshop on Alтаic Formal Linguistics. Besides working on theoretical linguistics, Esra has been teaching languages (Turkish, German, English) at the university level for a number of years.
CREES thanks Political Science Professor Ronald Francisco for his longstanding support of the Center and our activities. He will begin his retirement at the end of Spring 2014, after 40 successful years of teaching at University of Kansas. Dr. Francisco has been an active and vital member of the CREES family since he joined the REES faculty in 1976. He has taught courses in comparative politics, protest and revolution, and the politics of Europe. His research interests include protest and repression, and he maintains a database coded from multiple sources with interval data on protest, coercion and collective action in 28 European countries from 1980 through 1995, for which he received the Best Dataset Award (European Protest and Coercion, web.ku.edu/~ronfrand/data/index.html) in the Comparative Politics section of the American Political Science Association in September 2007.

His books include Collective Action Theory and Empirical Evidence; The Dynamics of Conflict; The Politics of Regime Transitions; United Germany: The Past, Politics and Prospects, written with H.G. Peter Wallach; and Berlin Between Two Worlds, edited with Richard L. Merritt.

Professor Francisco is a familiar face to anyone who attends weekly CREES Brownbags, and has also served repeatedly on the REES Executive Committee. He was awarded the Center’s Faculty Appreciation Award in the Fall of 2009. His resume of awards and honors includes a Fulbright for study in Berlin 1972-1973, as well as a long list of grants for research and conference support. He was a number of times designated “Outstanding Educator” by Torch Chapter of Mortar Board, and in 1978 received the H. Bernerd Fink Award for Outstanding Classroom Teaching.

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