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## U.S.-RUSSIA PEER-TO-PEER DIALOGUE PROGRAM GRANT

The Internet is awash in sensationalized news stories of dubious quality. Click-bait sites aggressively compete for our attention alongside traditional news outlets. Prodigious social media have become an arena for geopolitical struggle, as evidenced by the widespread coverage of Russian attempts at interference in the U.S. presidential election. During this turbulent era, a timely grant at the University of Kansas will help journalists and journalism students develop sound practices for verifying news and gathering accurate information.

KU researchers won a one-year, nearly \$90,000 grant from the U.S. State Department for the project, "Real News in the U.S. and Russia: Peer-to-Peer Strategies for Fact-Checking and Verification." Lisa McLendon, News and Information Track Chair in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications, is the project's Principal Investigator (PI). McLendon, along with Tom Volek, Associate Professor of Journalism, and Vitaly Chernetsky, Director of KU's Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies, will launch this project. The project will help journalism students and professional journalists in the U.S. and Russia learn strategies for fact-checking, verification, and accurate presentation of news, while building a connection between U.S. and Russian journalism educators.

When Chernetsky and Volek first brought the peer-



CREES and KU's William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications win a nearly \$90,000 Peer-to-Peer Grant from the U.S. State Department for the project, "Real News in the U.S. and Russia: Peer-to-Peer Strategies for Fact-Checking and Verification." Dr. Lisa McLendon, News and Information Track Chair in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications (featured right) is the project's Principal Investigator. McLendon, along with CREES Director Vitaly Chernetsky (featured left), and Associate Professor Tom Volek, School of Journalism, serve as the project leaders.

to-peer grant opportunity to McLendon's attention, she became quite interested. Volek had worked on many State Department funded programs and visited universities overseas to talk about media law and ethics. McLendon decided to focus on an important media issue: verification of media sources and fact-checking.

"I'm an editor by trade. I was working on the production end, and as an editor, that's where fact-checking came in," McLendon said. "When we wrote the peer-to-peer grant, we didn't know a lot about Russian meddling and fake Twitter accounts. Much of the press about fake news came out after we submitted the grant." McLendon submitted the grant in May 2017, and a couple of months later, Russian President Vladi-

mir Putin expelled hundreds of U.S. embassy employees.

Journalists face many challenges in Russia, including access to accurate information. "In Russia, there is no Freedom of Information Act. The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is a law that gives you the right to access information from the federal government. It is often described as the law that keeps citizens 'in the know' about their government. How do you operate in an environment, where anything published on paper can be false? The U.S. government puts lots of statistics online, such as the U.S. Census and demographics. Energy and export data is online and it's accessible in the U.S. This type of data doesn't exist in that format in Russia. It's interesting

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# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Welcome back to campus! It's my pleasure to welcome you back to a new Spring semester and hopefully, to warmer days ahead. I look forward to leading our Center this semester, as we continue growing and adapting to new challenges and opportunities. We have had a remarkably rich and successful fall semester, thanks to the energy and dedication of all the members of the CREES family, and especially our Center's outstanding staff.

The CREES brownbag lecture series and other special events continued offering an exciting combination of speakers from within our community and guests of the university. This fall, distinguished speakers included the Ukrainian writer Andriy Lyubka; Prof. Dirk Uffelmann, head of the Slavic literatures and cultures program at the University of Passau in Germany; Prof. Vlad Strukov of the University of Leeds in England, author of a new book on contemporary Russian Cinema; Kārlis Vērdiņš, noted Latvian poet and literary scholar; Olga Porshneva, Professor of History at the Ural Federal University in Ekaterinburg, Russia; and Croatian writer Goran Ferčec, a writer-in-residence at the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures from Oct 12-Nov 15. A brownbag lecture given by KU's own Prof. Erik Scott, entitled "Soviets at Sea: Navigating the Maritime Borders of the

Cold War World," drew particularly strong interest from students and faculty.

We kick off the roster of events this Spring semester with our Backus/Cienfuegos Memorial Lecturer, Beth Holmgren, Professor of Slavic and Eurasian Studies at Duke University. On Jan 29, she gave a lecture entitled "The Jews in the Show: Performing Poland for the Allies, 1942-1945," and the next day, a brownbag presentation, "The Country of Warsaw: Rethinking Urban Polish History." Later in the semester, Yale University's Prof. Marci Shore will deliver a Palij Lecture based on her recent book, *The Ukrainian Night: An Intimate History of Revolution*. Prof. Joshua First of the University of Mississippi will present about the classic 1960s film *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* in the context of Soviet modernity. Near the end of the semester, we will welcome one of the most acclaimed contemporary authors from our region, Ukraine's Serhiy Zhadan, who has two books coming out this spring in English translation. Please check the CREES website, Facebook page, or subscribe for our "Weekly Update" email by sending a request to [crees@ku.edu](mailto:crees@ku.edu), for the schedule of brownbag lectures on a variety of interesting topics. Our Kino Series will feature a new film from the region on a Thursday evening, once a month. These are recent films from our region that have received notable international success but are not yet readily available in this country. One of the films, *The Strayed*, will receive its North American premiere with us.

We look forward to this April's Annual Security Conference, "The Crime-Terror Intersections and Intelligence-Led Responses," led

by Mariya Omelicheva, KU Associate Professor of Political Science. Selected to receive a prestigious Minerva Grant from the U.S. Department of Defense's Minerva Research Initiative, Prof. Omelicheva, the study's principal investigator, along with Rowan University's Prof. Lawrence Markowitz, have been examining the relationship and intersections of drug trafficking, human trafficking, and terrorism in Central Asia, the Caucasus and Russia. Marking the completion of the three-year grant cycle, the conference will feature a distinguished roster of guest speakers.

CREES and KU's William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications are proud of winning a nearly \$90,000 Peer-to-Peer Grant from the U.S. State Department for the project, "Real News in the U.S. and Russia: Peer-to-Peer Strategies for Fact-Checking and Verification." Dr. Lisa McLendon, News and Information Track Chair in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications, along with Prof. Tom Volek, and yours truly serve as the project leaders. Conducted in partnership with the Humanities University in Ekaterinburg, Russia, the project helps journalism students and professional journalists in the U.S. and Russia learn strategies for fact-checking, verification, and accurate presentation of news, while building a connection between U.S. and Russian journalism educators. It also provides an opportunity for three KU students to work on the project. In February 2018, Prof. McLendon, Prof. Peter Bobkowski, and I will travel to Ekaterinburg to check on the program's progress. Our Russian partners will come to KU on a reciprocal visit in late April-early May to discuss

journalism in our respective countries, the unique challenges that journalists face, and effective journalism practices in both the U.S. and Russia.

Upon recommendation from U.S. Congressman Kevin Yoder, the Open World Leadership Center, an arm of U.S. Congress, asked KU CREES to host a delegation of members of the Ukrainian Parliament for a visit on Oct. 26-Nov. 1, focused on themes of government transparency and accountability. During their visit to Washington D.C., Kansas, and Missouri, parliament members had the opportunity to engage and interact with Members of Congress, Congressional staff, government officials and numerous other Americans, many of whom are the delegates' direct professional counterparts. According to Marie Yovanovitch, U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, more than 3,300 Ukrainians have participated in the Open World Program. These delegates often help move forward important reforms that the Ukrainian people, their government and the Embassy support. We wish to thank REES student Joe McConnell for successfully handling much of the logistics for the Ukrainian parliamentary delegation's visit. The Open World leaders and our guests were highly impressed by the experience and have asked CREES to host another delegation from a country in the region later this year!

A generous donation from a former CREES Director, Prof. Edith W. Clowes, will create new Russian language scholarships. For the 2018-2019 academic year, one \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded for a student to study the Russian language, to offset the cost of tuition. As the fund grows, Prof. Clowes hopes to grant three scholarships of \$1,500 each. We are grateful for her and her family's support of language study at KU, and we encourage alumni and friends to donate as they can, to support committed students.

CREES has continued to prepare for the new round of Title VI applications, together with other Area Studies Centers at KU. We have received some guidelines from the Department of Education about current expectations and priorities, and look forward to receiving the call for proposals sometime this spring, pending the approval of the new federal budget. In the meantime, our CREES staff continues to work on the many technical aspects of the application. We are fortunate to have amazing faculty, many wonderful initiatives, and great collaborations taking place across many departments and units. We

look forward with optimism to this new grant application.

A well-deserved round of applause goes to all our staff; their hard work makes it possible for us to sail through the rough seas of university restructuring, economic pressures, and responding to the evolving needs of our community, as well as to fast-moving current events. This semester, our Assistant Director Dr. Justyna Beinek will teach REES 899/GIST 898, an interdisciplinary M.A. Seminar. Ray Finch will teach REES 220/221, Societies and Cultures of Eurasia, as well as the capstone undergraduate REES seminar. With the support from College Online, Dr. Beinek is developing the online version of REES 110/111, to be offered for the first time this summer; our hope is that this course would benefit not only our core constituency on campus, but also other learners, notably active-duty military. CREES operations have been

greatly helped by Darra Stuart, who has been working as the Office Manager for CREES and CLACS since December 2017.

The Fall Mixer and the Holiday Party provided wonderful opportunities to strengthen our community ties, and share our successes from the fall semester. This semester, we look forward to our traditional Spring Festival on Sun, March 4, where we'll celebrate spring holidays across the region, with music, delicious dishes and good company. We hope you can join us! Please bring your favorite dish to share.

We enter spring 2018 with confidence and resolve, ready to grow, to withstand and overcome the challenges that may rise on our path. However, our success is impossible without our wider family. Please share with us your news and suggestions. As always, we are tremendously grateful for your continuing support.



Anne Wangles, Vitaly Chernetsky, CREES student Joe McConnell and Justyna Beinek enjoy the CREES holiday party.



Kids brighten the CREES holiday party!

## JOURNALISTS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to see what it's like to gather that information and report in a different environment in Russia," McLendon said.

"We are in a complicated time," Chernetsky said. "One of the reasons this grant series came back into existence is because of worsening of relations between the United States and Russia. We went back to a peer-to-peer relationship, a strategy commonly used in the final decades of the Cold War era, as dealing with government entities can be very difficult." The project highlights the continued importance of studying the languages and cultures of Russia and Eastern Europe.

The KU group will work in partnership with the University of Humanities in Ekaterinburg, Russia, a private university. Last spring, McLendon met Professor Oleg Medvedev, who works at that university and was part of a delegation of Russian journalists that visited the University of Kansas. McLendon soon connected with the University of Humanities' journalism department.

Professor Chernetsky noted the significance of this particular institution: "The University of Humanities in Ekaterinburg is the oldest operating private university in Russia, founded shortly before the collapse of the Soviet Union. The university specializes in the humanities, and it is located in a prominent cultural center. Many people call Ekaterinburg 'Russia's third capital.' The Yeltsin Center, Library and Museum are located here. The city has a significant tradition of openness and global contacts, with many media outlets based in Ekaterinburg."

McLendon will work closely with Svetlana Balmaeva, Dean of the University of Humanities in Ekaterinburg, to develop a 4-6 week course module to teach journalism students how to verify sources and fact-check information. The grant will cover translating materials and articles from Russian into English (supervised by Chernetsky), and English into

Russian (conducted by Russian partners). Students will analyze written texts, videos and other materials for verification, and learn how to check, verify and present news accurately. Information on best practices and effective techniques will be included in journalism classes. A second aspect of the grant will include bringing in guest speakers to do video lectures on a topic. Speakers will present materials in a professional capacity via video. One guest speaker will be KU Alum Aric Toler, who works for Bellingcat, an online investigative news site that works extensively on verification of open-access material found on the Internet. Aric Toler graduated from KU with an M.A. degree in Slavic Languages and Literatures.

In February 2018, Chernetsky, McLendon and a journalism professor, Peter Bobkowski, will travel to Ekaterinburg to check on the program's progress. "We look forward to meeting faculty and students in Ekaterinburg. We'll look at how the program is running, make sure we are on the same page with materials, and work out any technology issues. We'll also check out media outlets and meet with State Department representatives," McLendon said.

Russian partners will visit KU in May to discuss the differences in journalism

in their respective countries, the unique challenges that journalists face, and effective journalism practices in both the U.S. and Russia. "We'll look at how we can put these skills into the classroom. How do we integrate a module into an existing journalism class? We plan to release these materials publically, something that can be utilized with students anywhere," McLendon said. A resource website will be created for professional journalists and journalism students.

The project will not only provide useful tools for journalists, but may lead to improved diplomatic relations. "The whole idea is to connect people to people," McLendon said. "As we get people together, we realize that we have more in common than we thought. We share many of the same goals for our country and for our students."

*McLendon joined KU as the coordinator of the Bremner Editing Center in August 2012. She spent seven years as the deputy news desk chief at the Wichita Eagle. She launched her journalism career on the copy desk at the Denton (Texas) Record-Chronicle after earning a doctorate in Slavic Linguistics from the University of Texas. She has taught news editing at the University of North Texas, Friends University in Wichita, and Wichita State University.*

### KU SUMMER STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS IN L'VIV AND ZADAR



Prof. Mamić and students enjoy Krka National Park

The University of Kansas (KU) invites applications to its Summer Study Abroad programs in L'viv, Ukraine and Zadar, Croatia.

Intensive six-week program of Croatian language instruction, **May 20-June 30** in Zadar, Croatia, on the Adriatic coast. Students study at LinCro, run by Prof. Mile Mamić, of the University of Zadar. Six credit hours awarded by KU. One year of college-level Croatian is necessary for participation. *For more info, please visit:* <http://studyabroad.ku.edu/language-institute-zadar-croatia>

*Enjoy multiple excursions and a rich array of cultural activities in beautiful Eastern Europe!*

Intensive six-week program of Ukrainian language instruction, **June 3-July 17** at beautiful Ivan Franko National University in L'viv. The on-site director, University of Kansas faculty member Dr. Oleksandra Wallo is a L'viv native with 10+ years of experience teaching Ukrainian language and culture at U.S. universities. Six credit hours are awarded by KU. *For more info, please visit:* <http://studyabroad.ku.edu/language-institute-lviv-ukraine>

**Apply for a Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowship at one's own university to participate in the KU summer program in L'viv or Zadar!** <http://crees.ku.edu/flas-fellowships>



Prof. Wallo and students tour the Pidhirtsi Castle

# FORMER CREES DIRECTOR MAKES A GENEROUS DONATION TO CREATE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIPS

A generous donation by a former CREES Director, Professor Edith W. Clowes, will create new Russian language scholarships. Clowes served as CREES Director from 2008-2012. She holds the Brown-Forman Chair in the Humanities and teaches Russian language, literature, and culture and Czech literature in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Virginia.

The Clowes family has a wonderful tradition of supporting language learning, inspired first by her mother's love for the Czech culture and language. This love and appreciation for the Czech language and culture led her family to generously support the Czech Opportunity Fund, through the KU Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. This fund is aimed at expanding the teaching of Slavic languages at KU and has supported the hire of a Czech language lecturer in recent years.

This time, support will be focused on helping students defray the cost of taking Russian language classes. For the 2018-2019 academic year, one \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded for a student to study the Russian language, to offset the cost of 3-5 credit hours of language instruction. As the fund grows, Clowes hopes to grant three scholarships of \$1,500 each. The scholarships are specifically for students committed to the study of Russian language, to help pay for the credit hours for taking languages, and to support students who plan to use Russian in their future profession.

KU is one of the few universities where 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year Russian language courses are offered at the 5 credit hour level. Every day instruction and practice of Russian is crucial for students' progress in learning the language. Through this scholarship, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year Russian students can also receive help with the cost of advanced language instruction.

"I hope that the donation made to Russian language scholarships will be further evidence that shows both private and institutional commitment to CREES," Clowes said. "I envision the scholarships going to support CREES M.A. students or students with a CREES major. In five years, to grow the endowment, I would



Professor Edith Clowes enjoys a beautiful day in the Bay Area, where she has been on sabbatical this past fall. She recently returned to the University of Virginia to teach this spring semester.

strongly welcome other friends of CREES to donate as they can. It would be great to grow the fund, so a few scholarships could be offered each year. Hopefully, there are other alumni and professionals who would like to contribute to the fund, as opportunities arise, so that we can help fund more committed students," Clowes said.

With worsening relations between the U.S. and Russia, and the spread of misinformation, it is more important than ever to train specialists with advanced language skills and a knowledge of the region's history, culture, and politics. "KU has played a very significant role in military training and supporting American internationalism. It's in our security interests, and general human interests, to combat the isolationist view that is currently pervasive," said Clowes.

"We know that there are growing divides in American life—between rich and poor, and between urban and rural America. Levels of education and political and cultural knowledge vary widely. We are now hearing a wake-up call to help spread the facts about Russia's difficult

history, as well as its fabulous cultural riches. As a community, we must offer effective outreach, to present Russia as a neighbor in the world—one which we must understand better but certainly not emulate in our political decisions."<sup>1</sup>

Clowes hopes that KU will continue to excel at offering foreign languages in the Slavic area. "I would like foreign language learning and knowledge of our region to continue to be part of the KU brand," Clowes said. KU is one of the few institutions in the U.S. that offers more than 40 languages. "It speaks to the worldwide vision that KU has really valued, supported and developed, particularly under the leadership of Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little. I would encourage everyone, who would like to give, to support our students' efforts to learn a critical language."

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from an interview with Edith W. Clowes, "How Can Literary and Cultural Studies Be Politically Relevant after Charlottesville?" AATSEEL Newsletter, Oct 2017, pp. 5-7. [https://www.aatseel.org/100111/pdf/october\\_2017\\_aatseel\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.aatseel.org/100111/pdf/october_2017_aatseel_newsletter.pdf)

# CREES HONORED TO HOST MEMBERS OF THE UKRAINIAN PARLIAMENT

This fall, CREES was honored to host four delegates from the Ukrainian Parliament through the prestigious Open World Program, a nonpartisan program of the U.S. Congress. Delegates first met with members of Congress in Washington for a few days, and then arrived in Kansas City on October 26, 2017 to meet with representatives of local and state government. During their almost week-long stay, the delegation focused on accountable and transparent governance. The delegation consisted of four Members of the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine's Parliament, Ivan Krulko, Roman Semenukha, Mykola Velychkovych, Oksana Yurynets, and the Open World Program facilitator Veronika Gryshchenko. The MPs represented different regions of Ukraine, from Transcarpathia in the west to Kharkiv in the east, and four different political parties – two of them in the ruling coalition and two in the opposition. All four of them were active in the Euromaidan in 2013-2014, and were elected to the parliament for the first time in 2014.

Congressman Kevin Yoder, who serves on the Board of Trustees of the Open World Leadership Center, expressed a special interest in this delegation visiting Kansas, and highly recommended KU CREES as a

hosting institution. We take pride in our reputation as a center of excellence for Ukrainian Studies that dates back more than a quarter century. Prior to this visit, CREES successfully hosted a delegation through the Open World Program in 2011.

The Open World Program is an international professional exchange program that brings small delegations of emerging Eurasian leaders to the United States for short-term professional and cultural exchanges. As noted on the program's website, it "has enabled more than 25,000 current and future leaders from Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan to meaningfully engage and interact with Members of Congress, Congressional staff, and thousands of other Americans, many of whom are the delegates' direct professional counterparts."

The mission of the Open World Leadership Center is "to introduce rising leaders of emerging countries to the importance of legislative functions in creating and sustaining democracies." This goal is accomplished through "the introduction of young foreign leaders to the American democratic governing systems and free market operations at every level: federal, state, and local."

CREES arranged for each Member of Parliament to stay with a host family that had graciously offered to open their home to the delegates. After arriving Thursday evening, October 26th, the delegates met their host families for the first time at a local restaurant in Lawrence, and enjoyed dinner and conversation. CREES Director Vitaly Chernetsky made a welcoming toast to the delegates in Ukrainian. The following day, the delegates toured the main campus of the University of Kansas and the State Capitol in Topeka. They met with state legislators, visited the Kansas Governmental Ethics Commission, and met with representatives of the Kansas Sunshine Coalition for Open Government. They also participated in a round table with journalists covering statehouse politics in Topeka. During these meetings, the delegates had the opportunity to learn more about accountable and transparent governance in the U.S.

On Saturday, the delegates experienced different aspects of Kansas City. They sampled the fantastic barbecue that KC has to offer. The National World War I Museum was the next stop on their itinerary, and Jonathan Casey, Director of Archives at the museum, gave the delegates



Ukrainian Parliament members visit the Kansas Statehouse and Governmental Ethics Commission in Topeka.



Oksana Yurynets, Ukrainian MP enjoys a lovely conversation with her host family, Lyudmila Savinkova and Reza Derakhshani from Shawnee, KS.

a detailed guided tour. In the evening, the delegates were joined by senior staff of the Open World Program for an experience of Kansas City jazz. On Sunday, following a recognition ceremony for current and former hosts and community activists the Open World Program organized with CREES assistance, the delegates toured the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art and in the evening, they concluded an art-filled day with a concert at KU's Lied Center.

On Monday, October 30th the delegates toured Rep. Yoder's Overland Park office and had an extensive discussion with staffers about the day-to-day operations of a district office of a US congressperson. Ukraine's parliament includes both members elected to represent specific districts and those elected on party lists. Oksana Yurynets represents the district that includes the center of the city of Lviv, and she was particularly keen to learn more about the setup and operations of such district offices in the US. In the afternoon, the delegates gave presentations about their work and interests at the University of Kansas Edwards Campus to students, faculty, and community members. That evening, some of the delegates were able to experience a Kansas City Chiefs game in Arrowhead Stadium with host family members.

On their last day in the Midwest, the delegates wrapped up their visit with a

tour of the Truman Presidential Library, a visit to the International Relations Council of Kansas City, and a KU basketball game. Their visit to our region of the country was quite memorable and valuable. Delegates returned home to their work in the Parliament with new knowledge and skills to implement. They also expressed keen interest in helping foster ties between Kansas, and our university in particular, and potential partners in Ukraine.

Through this exchange, important connections are established between both the government representatives and the broader communities in the U.S. and countries in the region, which build a bridge of mutual respect, cooperation, and assistance in nation-building.

"Visits to new places often are memorable thanks to the streets and buildings we see, the historical treasures we encounter, but in Kansas our communication with the people we met was just as important. We were moved by the opportunity we had to speak Ukrainian thousands of miles from home. At the university, we were pleased to meet people who not only help preserve knowledge of Ukraine, its language and its culture, but also help disseminate it and thereby help our country. No less important was sharing our knowledge and experience, developing new contacts, and the opportunities to communicate with local politicians. We are pleased that soon we will be welcoming a former Kansas State Senator, Chris Steineger, on a visit to Ukraine," said Oksana Yurynets, Ukrainian MP.

The significance and value of this program cannot be overstated. "More than 3,300 Ukrainians have participated in the Open World program and its network of rising star alumni in key government agencies and throughout the private sector has helped move forward the reforms that the Ukrainian people, its government and we at the Embassy support," said Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch, U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, 2015-present.



Ivan Krulko, Ukrainian MP visits with Nancy Wingfield, a historian. She and her husband Nick Dosanjh graciously hosted Mr. Krulko.

# A VIBRANT PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CREES AND THE WORLD WAR I MUSEUM BENEFITS TEACHERS, KU FACULTY, AND STUDENTS

A continuing partnership between CREES and the National World War I Museum in Kansas City, provides new opportunities to K-12 teachers, KU faculty, staff, and students to learn from expert historians and glean new insights on World War I, and the region of Russia and Eastern Europe. In November 2017, the World War I Museum in Kansas City commemorated the 100-year anniversary of the United States' entry into World War I. On April 6, 1917, the United States joined its allies – among them Britain, France and Russia – to fight against Germany and its allies in World War I. To mark this special anniversary, the World War I Museum organized a Symposium on November 3 and 4, bringing in distinguished historians to speak on a variety of topics related to World War I. The World War I Symposium drew historians and educators from all over the United States. Symposium participants also toured a special exhibit on the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Speakers at the Symposium included KU's own Erik Scott, Associate Professor of Russian History, and Olga Porshneva, Professor of Russian History at the Ural Institute for Humanities, Ural Federal University in Ekaterinburg, Russia. A summary of their remarks can be found at the end of this article.

The World War I Museum thanked CREES for bringing in Professor Olga Porshneva to speak at the Symposium. Norman Saul, Professor Emeritus of History, organized a visit of Prof. Porshneva to KU, with a lecture at CREES this same weekend. As a token of appreciation for its partnership with CREES, the World War I Museum gave 10 complimentary tickets to CREES, to share with K-12 teachers, KU faculty, staff, and students (at a savings of \$250 per ticket).

Tracy Murray and Valerie Schrag, two veteran social studies teachers from Lawrence High School (LHS), benefited greatly from the Symposium. "I enjoyed the symposium immensely. I am so excited to use my new knowledge when I teach World War I this semester. In addition, it was inspiring to be around so many outstanding scholars. Their passion was infectious and I left the symposium feeling energized

to share knowledge and ideas with my students and colleagues," said Murray, a history teacher, who has taught at LHS for 17 years. Murray currently teaches Ancient World History and AP European History, and is the Social Studies Department Chair at Lawrence High School. In her AP European history class, Murray had two sets of students who were working on papers regarding the Russian Revolution.

Valerie Schrag has been teaching at LHS since 2001. She currently teaches AP U.S. History, Modern World History, and African American History. She earned her Master's degree in American History with a minor field in Russian History from KU. "I'd like to thank CREES for making these tickets available to teachers. It was so nice to spend a day learning from experts in the field and to glean new information to bring back to my classroom. In fact, the week after the symposium I covered World War I in my African American History class and was able to share information and resources from the symposium with my students," said Schrag.

"It was a wonderful opportunity to attend the Symposium and learn so many intriguing facets of World War I and the Russian Revolution. I look forward to sharing new insights about Russia in my outreach work with students," said Lisa Giullian, CREES Outreach Coordinator, who attended the Symposium. Each quarter, in an "Intro to World Languages" class



Amy Millet, Lisa Giullian, and Erik Scott tour the exhibit on the Russian Revolution at the world War I Museum.

for 7<sup>th</sup> graders, Giullian teaches a few days of Russian language and culture at three middle schools in Lawrence.

Amy Millet, a graduate student in the Department of History, and Matt Dunn, a senior majoring in History and European Studies, also enjoyed complimentary tickets to the Symposium. Matt Dunn is currently working on his Honors thesis in history, which investigates how the underground press in Belgium attempted to construct a distinctly Belgian national identity whilst under German occupation during the First World War. Amy Millet's research focuses on national identity in Habsburg Austria during the decades preceding World War I. "The outbreak of World War I really brings the diplomatic



Bruce Menning, Professor of Russian and Soviet Military History, accompanies Professor Olga Porshneva to the World War I Symposium.

(and military) finagling and maneuverings of Habsburg Austria to the fore, even though they were quickly overshadowed by Germany during and after the war. The symposium was very interesting and brought several pieces together, in terms of what was happening across the globe in 1917 – including Russia and the United States, in addition to the center of the war in Europe.”

Information on the Symposium speakers and a short summary of their remarks can be found at: <https://www.theworldwar.org/learn/2017-symposium/presentations>.

The presentation by Erik Scott, Associate Professor of History at KU, was titled “Unmaking and Remaking an Empire: Beyond the Russian Revolution.” If 1917 marked a pivotal year for the United States, it was even more transformative for Russia. Centuries of tsarist rule came to an abrupt end, and socialist revolutionaries came to the fore. While it is common to think of it as a single event occurring in one country, the so-called Russian Revolution in fact encompassed a series of national revolutions unfolding across the remnants of a vast Eurasian empire. Revolutionary fervor was often greatest among groups for whom class revolution and national revolution coincided, and Jews, Latvians, Poles, and Georgians all joined the socialist cause with exceptional enthusiasm. As the revolution was institutionalized, members of ethnic diasporas were overrepresented in very visible positions of power throughout the new Soviet state. Together, they sought to build an anti-imperialist union but ended up creating a new kind of empire.

Olga Porshneva, Professor of Russian History, gave a presentation entitled, “Russian Soldiers’ Beliefs and Attitudes as a Factor of the Russian Revolution of 1917.” Soldiers, who were disappointed by Russia’s faring in the First World War and were disillusioned with military and civil governance, took part in riots of the February (March) Revolution of 1917. The analysis of



Valerie Schrag and Tracy Murray, two history teachers from Lawrence High School enjoy the Symposium.

mass correspondence, resolutions adopted at soldiers’ meetings, and other sources, demonstrate that utopian ideals of social and political justice and just allocation of land were central to soldiers’ mindset, as 81% of soldiers were of peasant descent. Together with other factors, these aspirations played a key role in the transformation of soldiers’ mood and behavior throughout the Revolution. The utopian ‘instincts of justice’ and a yearning for peace contributed to radicalization of the Revolution, ensuing victory for the Bolshevik Party, and subsequent formation of the revolutionary mythology.



Bruce Menning and Olga Porshneva answer questions from Symposium participants.

# BROWNBAG LECTURE SERIES

## FALL 2017 Highlights

Videos of these lectures and others are archived at the [KUCREES YouTube Channel](#).

### [Mozart and the Czech National Revival: The Politics of Libretto Translation in Early Nineteenth-Century Prague](#)



On September 26, 2017, Martin Nedbal, KU Assistant Professor of Musicology, gave a brownbag lecture on Mozart and the Czech national revival. The three operas Mozart wrote to the librettos of Lorenzo da Ponte, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Così fan tutte*, were unusually popular in nineteenth-century Prague, partially because the composer himself visited the city

several times in the late 1700s and because he composed *Don Giovanni* specifically for Prague. As the Prague intellectual elites split into Czech and German speakers in the first half of the nineteenth century, Mozart's operas also became involved in nationalistic struggles between the two groups. Nedbal's presentation focused on nationalist aspects of the first Czech translations and produc-

tions of the three operas: *Don Giovanni* was first performed in Czech in 1825, *Così fan tutte* in 1831, and *Figaro* in 1852. The Czech translations were for the most part based on earlier German translations of the original Italian texts, mostly because the Czech opera ensemble in Prague was dependent on the production materials (scores and librettos) used by the more well-established German ensemble. However, Nedbal's examination showed that the Czech intellectuals attempted to avoid altered meanings that certain passages acquired in the German translations and stayed closer to Da Ponte's Italian original. Czech critics then interpreted these Czech translations as anti-German and used the idea of authenticity to bolster the notion of the emerging Czech culture as a viable counterpart to the German culture. Czech reviews of the translations also claimed that Czechs had a better understanding of Mozart than Germans. Thus, in spite of his German origin, Mozart was appropriated by the early nineteenth-century Czech national revival movement.

### [Color Line and Narrative: Visual Art Techniques in L.N. Tolstoy's Fiction](#)



On September 12, 2017, Megan Luttrell, KU Slavic Ph.D. candidate, gave a brownbag lecture based on the first chapter of her dissertation, which examines the changes in Lev Tolstoy's visual aesthetic. Using the 1857 short story "Lucerne" and the 1899 novel *Resurrection*,

Megan presents the two extremes of this aesthetic. "Lucerne" features a visuality more akin to painting, while *Resurrection* contains the achromatic palette and play of positive and negative space seen in black-and-white drawings and sculpture. In his "painterly" work "Lucerne," Tolstoy employs elements of composition traditional to landscape painting. In his descriptions of the Swiss town where the story takes place one can see his adherence to the rule of thirds (the division of the picture plane into three equal planes), his use of canonical color divisions within these planes, and a manner of framing his "painting" by showing it as seen through a window. The short story focuses far more on description than the plot, which is often halted altogether in

favor of lengthy descriptions of the setting. This emphasis on the space of the story over the progression of time links it with the visual arts which can depict only one moment in time. *Resurrection*, however, has far fewer instances of extended description and instead focuses on the linear progression of the plot. The novel contains an almost exclusively black and white color palette, and is rife with contrasts and binary oppositions such as the stark comparison of the natural world with the city, or man's spiritual and animal self. The differences between "Lucerne" and *Resurrection* reflect the differences in Tolstoy's philosophies of morality and the role of art, which become increasingly rigid and prohibitive by the end of his literary career.

# CONSUL GENERAL OF POLAND, PIOTR JANICKI VISITS KU



Polish Consul Piotr Janicki and Isabella Piekarczyk, a KU student from Polish Club.

Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago, Piotr Janicki, visited CREES on September 29, 2016. The most important event of the day was a meeting of the Consul with the KU academic community at the Kansas Union. Consul Janicki was greeted by Associate Dean for Research Tamara Falicov and Prof. Vitaly Chernetsky, Director of CREES. Consul Janicki delivered a speech titled, “Brothers in Arms: Central and Eastern Europe’s Dimension of Transatlantic Security and

Defense Cooperation.” His speech was followed by a plethora of questions and served as a starting point for a heated debate on Poland’s history and current politics, ranging from Poland’s engagement with NATO to the causes of the 2010 fatal crash of a Polish plane in Russia and from the current government’s educational policy to issues of diminishing state funding for book publishing in Poland. The meeting was attended by KU faculty members, staff, and students, including Prof. Nathan

Wood who specializes in Polish history, Prof. Svetlana Vassileva-Karagyozeva who heads the Polish program at the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at KU, and members of the KU Polish Club led by Krzysztof Borowski, a Ph.D. candidate in Slavic Languages and Literatures.

Earlier that day, Consul Janicki had a lunch meeting with Charlie Bankart, Associate Vice Provost for International Programs, Stephen Dickey, Chair of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, Randy Masten, Assistant Director in the Office of Graduate Military Programs, Prof. Agnieszka Międlar from the Department of Mathematics, Prof. Mike Wuthrich representing the Department of Political Science and Global and International Studies, and others. The Consul also received a tour of the extensive Polish collection of the Watson Library from Małgorzata Stamm, Library Specialist for Slavic and Eurasian Studies. Consul Janicki is the highest-ranking Polish diplomat to visit KU in recent history of possibly ever.

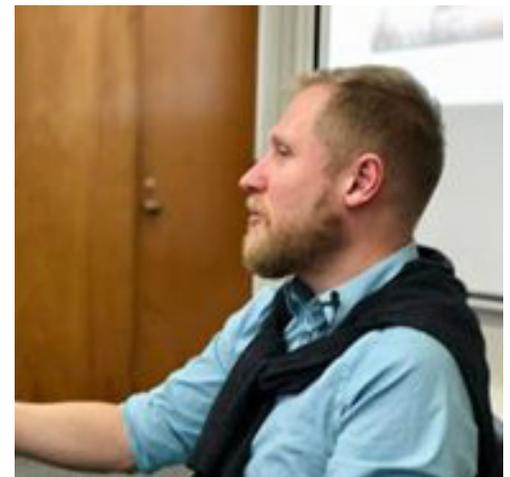
The Consul’s two-day visit to Kansas was continued on September 30 by his attending the Universal Film Festival in Overland Park, where he accepted an award for the best documentary film “The Touch of an Angel” on behalf of the Polish producers. The 2015 film, directed by Marek Pawłowski, tells the true story of how a Jewish-Polish boy Henryk Schoenker survived the Holocaust against all odds.

## **BROWNBAG CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10**

### **The Trauma of Digital Coming Out: Sexuality and Social Media in the Russian Federation**

On November 14, 2017, Professor Vlad Strukov, University of Leeds, gave a brownbag lecture, exploring the complex interactions between sexuality and social media in the Russian context by scrutinizing the concept of digital coming-out. What does it mean to be gay in contemporary Russia? How do Russians come out, if at all? Can social media help people deal with the trauma of coming out online? By exploring how members of a few online communities use social media to construct their sexual iden-

ties and deal with traumatic experiences, he demonstrated how traumas associated with digital coming-out are translated into activism and social awareness. The talk also challenged some assumptions about using big data in research, and discussed alternative modes of doing research in the humanities digitally. This event was co-sponsored by the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, the Department of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and the Institute for Digital Research in the Humanities.



# CREES Snapshots

Our Fall semester was full of exciting events and gatherings. Take a tour of some of the highlights:

**01** It's a great time to see friends and colleagues! Vincent Artman, Austin Charron, Gloria Funcheon, Emily Chase, Prof. L'Heureux, and a friend gather at the ASEEEES Convention in Chicago. Our thanks to ASEEEES for sharing this photo.

**04** Ukrainian writer Andriy Lyubka shares excerpts from his novel *Carbide*, shortlisted for the Angelus Prize for Central European Literature. The novel's English translation is forthcoming from Jantar Publishing.

**08** CREES Director Vitaly Chernetsky introduces Prof. Dirk Uffelmann, Chair of the Slavic literatures and cultures program at the University of Passau in Germany. Prof. Uffelmann gives a brownbag lecture entitled, "Vladimir Sorokin, Aleksandr Dugin, and the Eurasian Retrofuture."

**02** CREES graduate students Sam Buyers and John Stanko have dinner with recent CREES Alumna Susie Swanton in Chicago. Both Buyers and Stanko were attending the ASEEEES Convention.

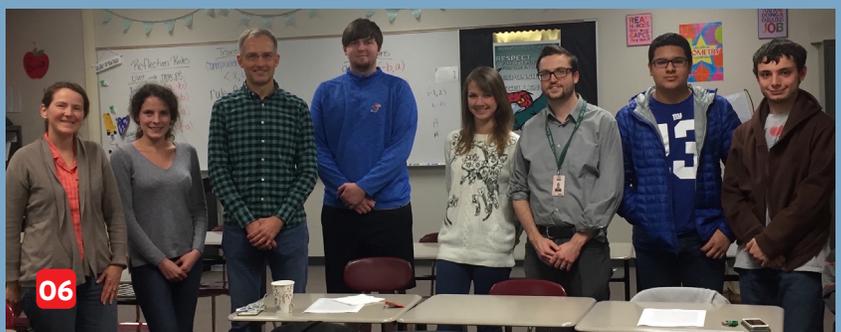
**05** Tom Crabtree, a KU alumnus and a senior executive at Boeing, speaks to KU students who are taking Russian and Chinese language classes. Boeing is looking to hire graduates with a command of Russian and Chinese.

**03** Prof. Erik Scott gives a brownbag presentation on "Soviets at Sea: Navigating the Maritime Borders of the Cold War World."

**06** Prof. Peter Bobkowski, School of Journalism, speaks to students about "fake news" in Russia and the U.S. at the Free State High School Slavic Club.

**07** Jared Warren, NYU Ph.D. candidate at the estate in Żelazowa Wola, Poland where Frederic Chopin was born in 1810.





# FACULTY & STAFF NEWS

**Marc Greenberg** (Slavic Languages & Literatures) was inducted into the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana in June 2017. <http://www.sazu.si/en/members/marc-l-greenberg>. He engaged in several activities to advance the field, notably, serving in the last of three years as a member of the ADFL Executive Committee and lobbying with the aid of JNCL-NCLIS for adequate appropriations to support the study of nationally critical-languages. He gave the paper “Clausal complementation in the Slovene Mura River dialect and its Balkan parallels” at the Naylor Lecture 20th Anniversary Conference on Balkan Linguistics in January 2017 at Ohio State University. Prof. Greenberg’s keynote lecture “Slavs as Migrants. Mapping Prehistoric Language Variation,” was delivered at the University of Toronto for the 2016 meeting of the Slavic Linguistics Society and was published in *Definitely Perfect. Festschrift for Janneke Kalsbeek* by Pegasus Oost-Europese Studies, Amsterdam, in 2017.

He worked with PI Prof. Katie Rhine and others to conceptualize and compete for the NEH Connections Grant to plan a new language-centered curriculum Global Medical Humanities, which was successful in the first round. The program will develop in concert with KU’s Community Tool Box project (<http://ctb.ku.edu>), a WHO-affiliated and award-winning resource that is being built out in all of the UN working languages. The future curriculum will provide students with opportunities to combine their language and regional interests with issues of public health and humanistic approaches to healthcare. He serves as General Editor for the Brill *Encyclopedia of Slavic Languages and Linguistics*, EDC 2020.

**Ray Finch** (CREES) traveled in August 2017 to the Cyber Center of Excellence at Fort Gordon, Georgia where he conducted a presentation on the topic, “Analyzing Russian Information Operations (IO) Warfare

Strategy” at the TechNet Conference. He also completed a paper titled, “Vladimir Putin and the Russian Military,” which will be published in a special edition of the *South Central Review* in January 2018.

**Mariya Omelicheva** (Political Science) has been working on a new book, *The Trafficking/Terrorism Nexus: Mapping Security Threats and State Responses in Central Asia* (with Lawrence Markowitz), under contract with Columbia University Press, and published two new articles, “Religion and Politics: Examining the Impact of Faith on Political Participation” in *Religion, State & Society* (with Ranya Ahmed) and “A New Russian Holiday Has More Behind It Than National Unity: the Political Functions of Historical Commemorations” in *Australian Journal of Politics and History*. She also contributed a chapter, “Russia’s Counterterrorism Policy: Variations on an Imperial Theme” to *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Counterterrorism Policy*, edited by Scott Romaniuk.

**Esra Predolac** (Slavic Languages & Literatures) presented her paper titled “Integrating the Comparisons Standard into the Curriculum” at the annual conference of the American Association of Teachers of Turkic (AATT) at Georgetown University in November 2017. As of January 2018, Dr. Predolac has become an executive board member of AATT. Her paper “The Indicative and Subjunctive Moods in Turkish” was published earlier this month in a special volume titled *Papers in Turkish and Turkic Linguistics* by the Indiana University Working Papers in Linguistics.

**Norman Saul** (History Emeritus) edited, annotated and provided a new introduction for Ernest Poole, *The Village: Russian Impressions* (Bloomington: Slavica, 2017). The series, of which he is co-general editor (with William Benton Whistenhunt)

now has five volumes out, five in press, and fifteen in progress, all edited by eminent scholars in the field. He also wrote a review essay of Sergei Zhuk’s *Nikolai Bolkhovitinov and American Studies in the USSR: People’s Democracy in the Cold War* (Lexington Books, 1917), published in the *Journal of Russian American Studies*, vol. 1, No. 2 (November 2017). Prof. Saul is also a co-managing editor of this electronic journal hosted by KU Libraries. This Nov issue also included articles by Lyubov Ginzburg (KU Ph.D.), Lee Farrow, and Rex Wade, along with other book reviews by Farrow, Ginzburg, and David Fogelsong. The journal is now soliciting articles and reviews for Vol 2, No. 1, to be published in May 2018.

In November 2017, Saul chaired a session on “Charles Crane in the Russian Revolution” at a conference on “Two Revolutions and Beyond,” sponsored by Columbia University Libraries’ Bakhmeteff Archive and the Harriman Institute at the Butler Library in New York, Nov 2-4. He also attended the annual ASEES Convention in Chicago, chairing a session on “Americans Recall the Bolshevik Revolution” and delivering a paper, “The Helsingfors Sailors’ Assembly in 1917.” The latter has been selected for inclusion in Vol 20, *The Global Impacts of Russia’s Great War and Revolution: the Arc of Revolution, 1917-24*, in the series, *Russia’s Great War and Revolution, 1914-1922: The Centennial Reappraisal*, published by Slavica at Indiana University.

**Erik Scott** (History) presented his research on Soviet defectors and the maritime borders of the Cold War world at ASEES in Chicago. The paperback edition of his book, *Familiar Strangers: The Georgian Diaspora and the Evolution of Soviet Empire*, was released by Oxford University Press in August 2017. He gave a book talk at KU in early October.



Reunion of Kenneth Naylor lecturers at Ohio State University, January 19, at the Twentieth Anniversary Naylor Conference. Professor Greenberg is in the back row, fifth from the left.

# STUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS

**Emily Csinsi** (REES MA '14) and her husband Eric returned from their Peace Corps service in Mongolia in July. Both she and Eric began new jobs as Special Agents in January 2018 at the National Background Investigation Bureau (NBIB). They recently moved to Denver.

**Alaina DeLeo** (CREES/Journalism) is on study abroad with the School of Russian and Asian Studies (SRAS) in Irkutsk, Russia for the 2017-2018 academic year. She received a Charles Braver Grant, a journalism internship to write about interesting places in Siberia. The Braver Grant encourages students to live active, culturally-conscious lives while studying abroad. The grant awards students with a stipend to participate in creating new materials for [Students Abroad](#) or [ArtInRussia.org](#). These sites serve as a platform for students to share their experiences and, in doing so, help other students to more actively explore their surroundings and submerge themselves in local culture while abroad.

**Joshua DeMoss** (Law/REES MA '17) took a new position as a Participant Recruiter for the American Councils for International Education. He leads a bi-national recruitment team for the State Department program FLEX, based out of field offices in Kazakhstan and Ukraine. His responsibilities include publicizing competitions in local language(s); interviewing candidates in Russian, Ukrainian, and English; conducting prerequisite English tests; associated record keeping and reporting; working with school officials and Education Ministries to identify and secure testing locations. He travels extensively within the region.

**Ruoxi Du** (REES MA '12) is a graduate student at the University of Iowa. She expects to graduate with a MS in Information Science and a Ph.D. in Political Science.

**Megan Luttrell** (Slavic Languages & Literatures) received a Norman Saul Travel Award to participate in the upcoming AATSEEL conference in Washington D.C. in February 2018.

**Joseph McConnell** (REES) was named the top ten of the national order-of-merit list by the U.S. Army Cadet Command. He placed sixth nationwide out of 5,536 senior ROTC cadets on the list.

**Nolan Schmidt** (REES/Slavic Languages & Literatures BA '17) is now enrolled in the M.A. program in Russian and East Central European Studies at the University of Passau, in Passau, Germany.

**John Stanko** (REES) received a Norman E. Saul Travel Award to present a paper at the Central Slavic Conference in St. Louis in October entitled, "A Twenty-First Century Albazin?: The Russian Far East and Russia-China Relations." He was admitted into the Golden Key International Honour Society. Stanko, along with Sam Buyers (REES MA student) attended the ASEES annual convention in Chicago. They enjoyed a wonderful evening with Alumna Susie Swanton (REES MA '17). Stanko was also granted membership in Phi Beta Delta, the first honor society dedicated to recognizing scholarly achievement in international education. He is a Research Assistant at the Institute for Policy & Social Research. He also works as a volunteer



Nolan Schmidt's travels take him to Zagreb. A 13<sup>th</sup>-century church, St. Mark's is the parish church of old Zagreb, located in St. Mark's Square.

copy-editor for the *Language Learning & Technology* journal.

**Jared Warren** (REES MA '13) is in his fourth year of a Ph.D. program in Modern European history at New York University, currently living in Warsaw for dissertation research.



What an adventure! Alaina De Leo enjoys climbing through the ice castles near Lake Baikal.



Joshua DeMoss enjoys hiking in Kazakhstan.

# GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

The Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies (CREES) has been a national leader for the study of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe since 1959.

The Center is a degree-granting program within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Kansas.

Many of our activities are enhanced through private donations to the Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies.

Special events, guest lecturers, scholarships and study abroad opportunities are just some of the ways your donation can help us ensure our Center's vitality.

We hope that you will contribute generously to strengthen the Center's programs by sending your gift today.

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## BECOME A CREES DONOR TODAY

### CREES GENERAL FUND

The CREES General Fund supports a wide range of educational and outreach activities on campus and in the wider community. Among its dedicated sponsors are the **Oswald P. Backus/Anna Cienciata Memorial Fund** for visiting lecturers in Polish Studies, the **Bramlage/Willcoxon Family Foundation Fund**, which provides scholarships to KU REES MA students who have strong connections to the state of Kansas, and the **Norman E. Saul Fund**. Named after KU History Emeritus Professor Norman E. Saul, the Saul fund supports REES students with travel grants to collections or to REES-related conferences for professional development.

### PALIJ FAMILY FUND

The Palij Family Fund supports visiting lecturers specializing in Ukrainian studies. The fund also supports the Ukrainian Studies Prize for an outstanding student specializing in Ukrainian.

### GEORGE C. JERKOVICH FUND

The mission of the Jerkovich Fund is twofold: 1) to support the development of KU's South Slavic library collection; 2) to provide awards to outstanding students who have demonstrated an interest in the study of Croatian or Serbian history, literature, folklore, or culture.

### ROY & BETTY LAIRD FUND

This fund is named after the late Professor Roy D. Laird, a longtime member of the Russian and East European Studies (REES) and Political Science faculties, and Ms. Betty Laird, whose continued support of CREES activities includes sponsoring the annual Roy & Betty Laird Essay Contest. Monies donated to support this fund will primarily contribute to the advancement of Russian Studies.

### JAROSEWYCZ FAMILY FUND

The Jarosewycz Family Fund provides scholarships for graduate students who have shown commitment and scholarly interest in Ukraine and Ukrainian Studies.

### ALEXANDER TSIOVKH MEMORIAL FUND

The fund is named after the late Professor Alexander Tsiovkh, a longtime professor of Ukrainian Studies at University of Kansas. Monies donated to this fund are used to support students studying Ukrainian Area Studies at KU.

### SPASIBO FUND

The Gerald E. Mikkelson Fund is intended to sustain the Siberia and St. Petersburg components of KU's instructional profile.



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A secure online donation can be made to CREES via the KU Endowment website at: [crees.ku.edu/give-crees](https://crees.ku.edu/give-crees)

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