

The New Horizons Foundation: Engaging Romanian Youth

By Mary Rose Conroy, ICP Intern

Husband and wife team Dana and Brandi Bates founded The New Horizons Foundation (NHF) in the coal-mining town of Lupeni, Romania in 2000. NHF focuses on building social capital by providing Romanian youth opportunities for leadership development and civic engagement, while simultaneously bringing youth service policy to the forefront of the national agenda. The legacy of communism is still felt throughout the country, as years of corruption and elitism have left the average Romanian suspicious and untrusting. Faced with citizens who were often cynical about their ability to initiate positive change, NHF applied for, and received, one of ICP's small grants for policy development. Since receiving the grant, the NHF team has worked tirelessly to strengthen civil society and youth development through the implementation of a national youth service policy.



Braitia creek clean-up, December 2005. Photo courtesy of <http://www.new-horizons.ro/>.

Two programs form the cornerstone of NHF's approach to social capital development. The first is the Viata program, which brings together 500 high-school aged youth each summer for a week of adventure education and service-learning. To instill values and self confidence, while building a sense of community and team work, Viata combines activities such as ropes courses, rock climbing and orienteering with a community service project and nightly reflections. Viata was the first program that NHF developed but, as Dana Bates noted, "we quickly realized that something more had to be done as the 'shot in the arm' of our summer program could not vaccinate youth against the apathy and corruption in everyday life."

To read the full article, please follow the link,

<http://www.icicp.org/index.php?tg=fileman&idx=get&inl=1&id=17&gr=Y&path=&file=The+New+Horizons+Foundation+Final.pdf>

Afterschool Alliance Advocates for Afterschool Programs

By Lisa Lederer, Consultant, Afterschool Alliance

Afterschool Programming: One Key to Service-Learning

Parents and educators value afterschool programs because they keep young people safe, inspire them to learn, and help working families, but another less heralded facet of afterschool is its commitment to service-learning. Service-learning is an educational tool that allows students to practically apply concepts they learned in the classroom to service projects that benefit their communities.

One example of the thousands of afterschool service-learning programs is the YMCA Earth Service Corps project that operates environmentally focused service-learning projects for youth in 30 states. In Ohio, students in Earth Service Corps' Camp Kern division helped monitor and manage the water quality of the Little Miami River, gaining invaluable experience that both reinforced biological concepts they learned in the classroom and benefited their community.¹ According to

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Service News Worldwide is produced by Innovations in Civic Participation. This monthly newsletter is intended to be a resource for current news and events related to service, country information, and relevant publications and internet resources, in addition to in-depth discussions of different types of service and the issues that accompany them.

The Russian Federation: A New State Strategy for Youth Policy

By Bryan Seck, ICP Intern

In the Soviet era, young people participated in mandatory service activities through their schools and state youth organizations. When Communist rule dissolved in Russia, so did the mandatory service policies, and by 2006, only 2.7% of youth in the Russian Federation served in civic associations. According to the *Strategy of State Youth Policy in the Russian Federation*, less than half of Russian youth participate in federal elections, and only 33% of those younger than 35 are interested in politics.

The Russian government recognizes that young people's service and voting records since the transition to democracy reflect their sense of disempowerment. This is a worrisome situation, particularly given the fact that Russia's population is aging and these youth will soon be taking responsibility for the economic and political future of the country. To address these issues, the Russian Federation has drafted a new proposal for the resurrection of a state youth policy that will focus on scaling up youth civic engagement, job training and entrepreneurship.

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Afterschool Alliance

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Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant, service-learning programs like this perfectly align with afterschool initiatives: "Service-learning helps connect kids to their communities, teaches them that they can and should care about the world around them, and helps build their sense of the possible."

A Call to Action: Increasing Federal Funding for Afterschool Programming

Many afterschool programs receive funding from the federal government's 21st Century Community Learning Centers afterschool initiative, which was developed to provide community centers with resources for programs that enrich academic learning, foster youth development, and provide families with educational opportunities.² Five years ago, advocates of afterschool programs hoped for a significant increase in federal support for such programs with the passage of the *No Child Left Behind Act*, which called for slow but steady increases in federal funding. However, none of those increases materialized to date, and as a result, many programs have been forced to close or cut back programming for youth.

To promote greater federal support for afterschool programs, on April 24, 2007, the Afterschool Alliance is bringing hundreds of afterschool providers, students, and advocates to Washington, D.C. for the Afterschool for All Challenge. Participants will spend the day meeting with Members of Congress and their staffers about the importance of increasing funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative.

The Afterschool Alliance is encouraging advocates who cannot travel to Washington D.C. to contact their congressional representatives on the 24th by email, telephone, or fax, with a message supporting afterschool programs. For more information on the Afterschool for All Challenge, visit www.afterschoolalliance.org. To contact a Member of Congress, visit <http://capwiz.com/afterschool/home/>.

¹ <http://www.yesc.org/ThisLesson.cfm?id=16>

² <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg55.html>

New Horizons Foundation (NHF) to be Featured in Forthcoming Publication

Roland Hoksbergen of Calvin College is the author of a chapter profiling the New Horizons Foundation. The chapter, "Building Social Capital in Post-Communist Romania: The New Horizons Foundation and Experiential Education," will be published by Notre Dame Press in a book honoring former ethicist development pioneer Denis Goulet. The chapter discusses how NHF encourages "authentic" development in Romania by building upon Romanian values to inspire and empower youth.

To read the chapter, please follow the link,

http://www.icicp.org/index.php?tg=fileman&idx=get&inl=1&id=17&gr=Y&path=&file=Goulet_aper_final.pdf

Comments and/or suggestions are welcomed, and we strongly encourage contributions for future issues.

Please direct enquiries to info@icicp.org

New State Strategy for Youth Policy

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A Proposal for a State Youth Policy

The Russian Federation adopted the *Strategy of State Youth Policy* in December 2006. The strategy outlines Russian youth policy from December 2006 to 2016, with youth defined as persons between the ages of 14 and 30. According to Anton Lopukhin from the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry that will implement the policy, the proposed budget for the strategy is 1 billion rubles (USD38 million) and will be voted on in October 2008. Lopukhin notes that the strategy will give “a better chance for young Russian citizens to be involved in the community.”

The first goal of the *Strategy of State Youth Policy* is to create conditions and opportunities for the successful socialization and empowerment of youth. The second goal is to develop young people’s critical life skills for the political, social and economic development and stability of Russia. To achieve these goals, the *Strategy of State Youth Policy* has outlined three main initiatives that focus on volunteering, youth entrepreneurship, and information for young families.

To read the full article, please follow the link,

<http://www.icicp.org/index.php?tg=fileman&idx=get&inl=1&id=17&gr=Y&path=&file=Russia+Youth+Policy+article.pdf>

Resources

Free Planning Resources for National and Global Youth Service Day

Youth Service America is offering free resources for National and Global Youth Service Day that young people and organizations can utilize to plan their youth service projects. To download free planning tool kits, service-learning curriculum guides and/or posters please visit www.ysa.org/nysd/resource/planning.cfm

National and Global Youth Service Day Grants

Youth Service America is offering grants for National and Global Youth Service Day to help young people and organizations develop and implement their service projects. To learn more about these grants please visit http://www.ysa.org/awards/award_grant.cfm#nowavailable.

Publication Offers Insight on Children’s Participation

KnowingChildren, an organization dedicated to improving availability of information on policies and programs focusing on children’s rights, recently published a collection

of papers concerning children’s participation through its ‘Essential Readings’ series. *Beyond article 12-Essential Readings in children’s participation* presents theories, philosophies, and policies that focus on child and youth engagement. To learn more about this publication please visit <http://www.knowingchildren.org/reading.php>.

Editorial Projects in Education Inc. (EPE) Hosts ‘Open House’

EPE, a nonprofit dedicated to raising public awareness on issues concerning US education, is hosting an ‘open-house’ for one of its online sites, edweek.org. From March 19 to April 15, subscribers and non-subscribers alike can access and utilize the site’s resources, archives and publications, including the 10th annual special report on technology and education that will be released March 29th. To learn more visit <http://www.edweek.org/ew/index.html>.

New Publication from the Global Youth Service Policy Scan

The Global Youth Service Policy Scan has published a new paper, “An Exploration of Movements Toward National Youth Service Policy in 15 countries in Eastern Europe and the Balkans,” that maps and analyzes the region’s movement toward adopting national youth service policies (NYSPs).

In addition, the paper identifies regional and international organizations that are leading the movement, analyses major impediments to the movement, and presents survey respondents’ recommendations to policy makers for developing and implementing NYSPs.

To read the paper, please follow the link,

<http://www.icicp.org/index.php?tg=fileman&idx=get&inl=1&id=17&gr=Y&path=&file=EasternEuropeNYSPRegionalReport.pdf>

ICP News and Happenings

ICP's Executive Director Featured in Span Magazine

ICP's Executive Director, Susan Stroud, spoke at the International Association for Voluntary Efforts conference in New Delhi, India in November, 2006. There, she spoke to participants about how youth service can contribute to national development. You can read about Susan's lecture and work in *Span Magazine*, a bi-monthly publication of the US Embassy in New Delhi, India. To read the article, please follow the link, <http://www.icicp.org/index.php?tg=fileman&idx=get&inl=1&id=17&gr=Y&path=&file=span.pdf>.

Service News Headlines

New South African Youth Development Forum

The South African government is working with the National Youth Commission (NYC) to create a Youth Development Forum (YDF) that will focus on improving the lives of South African's youth. The YDF will focus primarily on young people's economic participation and development as a strategy to alleviate youth poverty. To read the full article, please visit <http://www.citizen.co.za/index/article.aspx?pDesc=33397.1.22>.

New Asian Youth Publication

A new magazine, *Today's Youth Asia*, was launched on February 21, 2007 in Katmandu, Nepal. The bi-monthly publication focuses on youth issues and policies in Asia, and will feature articles from correspondents across the region. The magazine's chief editor, Santosh Sah, believes the magazine will encourage readers to recognize and embrace Asia's connectedness and integration. To read the full article, please visit <http://www.24-7pressrelease.com/>.

US Adults Support Voluntary Service

A recent Harris Poll conducted in January 2007 reports that 77% of US adults believe that youth service is important for the country, but that most (73%) do not believe such service should be compulsory. In addition, 55% of those polled believe that the federal

ICP Staff Present at Summit

ICP staff Charlotte McDowell and Robin Taylor attended the Inter-American Summit on Conflict Resolution Education from March 14 to 17 to present on "Youth as Assets in National Reconciliation" with Cristina Escudero, the Deputy Director of Chile's National Institute of Youth (INJUV). The team also participated in the policy dialogue sessions aimed at advancing both national and international conflict resolution education. More information on the summit outcomes and related initiatives will be published in the next edition of *Service News Worldwide*.

government should increase its support of national service programs such as the Peace Corps and AmeriCorps so any young person interested can participate. To read more about the results, please visit http://www.harrisinteractive.com/harris_poll/index.asp?ID=733.

Youth Organization in Nigeria Ready for a Busy Year

In a move to strengthen and consolidate Nigeria's young democracy, the National Youth Movement for Transparent Elections – Partners for Democratic Development (NAYMOTE-PADD) has scaled up its civic education campaigns and activities for 2007. In January, NAYMOTE-PADD held two youth forums that focused on young Nigerians' role in promoting and strengthening Nigeria's social and economic prosperity. To read more about NAYMOTE-PADD's activities, please visit

South African Government Promotes National Youth Service

The South African Government recently recruited 30,000 young South Africans to participate in a National Youth Service scheme to promote and bolster the country's economic prosperity. The government hopes the National Youth Service program will provide youth with critical life skills they can market and utilize in the workforce. The program has already helped 5,000 former participants find jobs. To read the full article, please visit <http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/viewinfo.cfm?id=3519>.

Upcoming Events

Act! Speak! Build! Week: Habitat for Humanity's international student initiated week of advocacy: April 16-22, 2007. For more information, please visit <http://www.habitat.org/youthprograms/actspeakbuild/>.

National and Global Youth Service Day: April 20-22, 2007. For more information, please visit <http://www.ysa.org/nysd/>.

AmeriCorps Week, Getting Things Done: May 13-20, 2007. For more information, please visit <http://www.americorps.gov/about/ameriCorpsweek/index.asp>.

Civics World Assembly: May 23-27, 2007; Glasgow, Scotland. For more information, please visit <http://www.civicyouth.org/worldassembly.html>.

Generations United 14th International Conference, Intergenerational: IT'S MONUMENTAL: July 24 - 27, 2007; Washington, D.C. For more information, please visit http://www.gu.org/GU_Co12281388.asp.

Community Works Institute on Service-Learning: July 24-28, 2007; Shelburne Farms, Vermont. For more information, please visit <http://www.vermontcommunityworks.org/>.

TUNZA International Youth Conference: August 26-30, 2007; Liverkusen, Germany. For more information please visit <http://www.unep.org/tunza/youthconference/About/index.asp>.