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[About SHU](#)
[Admissions](#)
[Academics](#)
[Offices & Services](#)
[Athletics](#)
[News & Events](#)
[Catholic Mission](#)
[Give to SHU](#)
[Alumni](#)

[About Seton Hall](#)
[Applying](#)
[Visiting](#)
[Academics](#)
[Campus Life](#)
[Catholic Mission](#)
[Athletics](#)
[Libraries](#)
[Employment](#)
[Offices & Services](#)

News & Events

Center for Global Education Visit to Ukraine and Macedonia

Seton Hall > News & Events

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by: Maribel Roman

The Center for Global Education, housed in the College of Education and Human Services, recently started its third year of the Deliberating in Democracy (DID) after another exciting year and summer. The DID program, funded by the Constitutional Rights Foundation and Street Law, is designed to improve teaching and learning of democratic principles and the skills of civic deliberation through professional development sessions, classroom civic deliberations, lessons on controversial issues, student conferences, online discussion and exchanges between U.S. and partner countries.



Last March five teachers from Ukraine visited New Jersey. The group was welcomed at a dinner attended by New Jersey DID high school teachers and faculty, staff and administrators from the College of Education and Human Services.

During their time here the Ukrainian educators met and worked with both secondary education and elementary education students in a series of seminars and classroom visits. In these settings they discussed differences and similarities in the educational system of each country. They expressed surprise at the number of female secondary education mathematics majors, and declared their enthusiastic appreciation for the classroom climate and teacher-student relationship they observed. The group also reported that they found the interactive nature of the university classrooms to be highly desirable, and something they planned to address on their return. Of particular interest to the teachers was an exploration of efforts in this country to promote inclusive classrooms. The remainder of their visit was filled with visits to the area high schools working with Ukrainian high schools, as well as visits to area historic and cultural sites.



In early April four NJ teachers joined Maribel Roman, CGE Co-Director, in a visit to Ukraine. The New Jersey group was hosted in Kyiv by the DID team in Ukraine, and visited schools, cultural, religious and political sites. Students at many of the schools performed skits and actively involved the New Jersey team in deliberations that were conducted by schools in both countries. This was the 2nd year of the exchanges, and the friendships that have been formed facilitate work in the

participating schools. The New Jersey team also had an opportunity to meet university students at the Kyiv Pedagogical university who are working with students in the secondary education program at Seton Hall.

This summer, Jim Daly, Greer Burroughs and Maribel Roman joined two NJ teachers in Macedonia to attend the 2009 Deliberating in a Democracy International Summer Conference in Ohrid. Close to 100 educators from throughout Eastern Europe and the United States met with site directors and university officials to review progress to date and to plan next year's programs. An overview of the on-going assessment of the program, conducted by researchers from the University of Minnesota, was overwhelming positive. The New Jersey team was able to tour the area around lake Ohrid, exploring early Christian monasteries and other cultural sites. A visit to the capital of Skopje concluded the trip.

This semester the Center held its first professional development meeting on September 21. The initial deliberation for New Jersey and Ukrainian partner schools is on the topic of cyberbullying. Rosemary Skeele, Ed D, Director of graduate and special programs in the Educational Studies Department at Seton Hall gave a presentation on the topic to the New Jersey DID teachers. This year will once again include several video conferences between the NJ and Ukrainian teachers and students as well as the exchanges to and from Ukraine

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in the spring. This year the DID program expanded by adding 2 new schools, Indian Hills High School and Summit Middle School. Additional teachers have also joined the program from previously participating schools.

In addition the Center will continue its work with the university program. Seton Hall University social studies candidates will be working with teacher education candidates at the Kyiv Pedagogical University, Ukraine, and possibly with students at Vilnius University, Lithuania. In addition the Center launched its Diversity Project on September 22 between SHU secondary education students and students at the University of North Dakota. Students from History High School in Newark were joined by their principal and a teacher at the initial video conference between Seton hall and North Dakota. The project consists of sharing information about teacher prep programs, common readings, deliberations, video conferencing and exploring the impact of diversity on teaching and learning.

For more information on the Center please visit the website at:
<http://www.centerforlcbaled.org/>

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