

THE NEW STAR

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GRADUATION

the class of 2026, be proud of what you've achieved!



THANK YOU, USCAEF!



EXCHANGE SEMESTER IN BERLIN



FACES OF KYRGYZ DRAMA



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Thank You, USCAEF: Gratitude And Recognition



There are events that come to an end—yet continue to live on. The 2026 Regional Alumni Conference was exactly that. Three days at Issyk-Kul, with about 170 people from different countries and different generations. We spoke with those for whom these days became something more than just a conference. Before talking about the people, we need to talk about the program. The U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation (U.S.-CAEF) is a scholarship program that gives young people from Central Asia an opportunity they might never have had otherwise. Scholars from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan enrolled at AUCA in Bishkek and KIMEP University in Almaty to study business, economics, software engineering, or applied mathematics. Over the course of decades, the program has produced more than 400 alumni. Today, they are managers, entrepreneurs, analysts, consultants, and employees of international organizations. They live in Bishkek, Almaty, Dushanbe, France, Tashkent, Toronto, and Berlin. They are living proof that a single opportunity can change a whole life.

“Of course, what matters most are the people”



Abubakr is a fellow of Class '2028 from Tajikistan. He is a Business Administration student. He learned about the program from friends and at information sessions organized by USCAEF. When it came time to choose a university, AUCA was his top choice. After submitting his application, he waited anxiously for the results alongside his mother. “I told her back then: if I get in, it will change my life. And it did.” It changed—not just in terms of a degree or a career. The program helped him grow as a person. He especially remembers the sessions with psychologists. “Thanks to them, I blossomed as a person and learned a lot of new things about myself.” He admits that even his talkativeness, which he didn’t take seriously before, he now considers a real asset: it has given him many connections and opened doors that would otherwise have remained closed. At RAC 2026, Abu was a volunteer and handled social media management. Over the course of three days, he met half of the alumni, found people in his field, and managed to soak up the entire atmosphere of the event. “I think those three days at RAC were the best days of my life. During those three days, completely different people came together not because of the program, but because of who they are. Without them, USCAEF wouldn’t be USCAEF. What’s happening to me now, thanks to the program, is a miracle.”



“I didn’t think I was the right fit. But I gave it a try”

Sitora Shagambaeva graduated from KIMEP University in 2017 as a USCAEF scholar. She learned about the program through a friend who was already a freshman. She didn’t believe it was for her. “I wasn’t a straight-A student, my English wasn’t perfect, and it seemed to me that opportunities like this were for others, but definitely not for me. But somewhere deep inside, there was still hope: what if it works out? And I decided to give it a try.” She still remembers that call from Fabia in detail. She had just finished her shift at the Mango store; it was around six in the evening. And she heard, “You’ve become one of the three finalists in the program.” Something changed in her at this moment. For the first time, she believed in herself. People had the strongest influence on her. Interacting with young people from different countries and cultures opened her eyes to how differently people can live, dream, and build their futures. She arrived at RAC 2026—and felt something she hadn’t expected to feel so intensely. “It wasn’t just a conference. It was a space filled with incredible people who shared similar values, outlooks on life, and a desire to make the world around us better. The strongest feeling that remained afterward was the sense that I had been home, surrounded by family.” The program helped her see her own potential—and now she strives to be that kind of person for others. For those who believe in you before you even start believing in yourself. When asked what she misses most right now—from a small town far away in Canada—she admitted that she misses having her people around her.

“They’re like family to me”

Aidana is a classmate of Abu’s in the Business Administration Department. She learned about USCAEF when she returned from the United States and immediately decided this was her chance. Even though she knew the competition was fierce—the program selects only a handful of people from all of Central Asia—she successfully made the cut. “The first year was easy thanks to the opportunities CAEF provided. Without them, I would have struggled a lot.” She has changed noticeably over the past two years. While at first she was afraid to approach older graduates and strike up a conversation, now she gets along with everyone. This was especially noticeable at RAC: despite the age difference, there was no barrier between them. Everyone was goofing around, dancing, laughing, and building something real. Aidana watched her peers in the program and noticed that people are opening up. Those who seemed withdrawn two years ago are now standing on stage and giving speeches. USCAEF does something to people—something good. “I can say that this is the very best program. And they’re like family to me.”



“So many years have passed, yet we’re still the same”



Sezim Beksultanova graduated from AUCA and the USCAEF program in 2015. Eleven years have passed—but she remembers every detail: the phone call at the Madina Market, where she was told she was among the finalists. That moment became the starting point of her entire adult life. During her time, there were no major events or large conferences. But even then, she understood the most important thing: “Every USCAEF member has something that makes us like-minded people.” At RAC 2026, she was convinced of this once again. In her words, those were the happiest and most unforgettable three days. She slept a total of just six hours, but the rest of the time flew by unnoticed. The organizers went out of their way to ensure that each of the 170 people felt at home. Among the most touching moments of the conference, Sezim highlighted Peggy’s words addressed to all the graduates: “You’ve all grown so much. We never even dreamed of what you’ve become. You stand on stage and speak such wise and thoughtful words.” For Sezim, USCAEF is, above all, a unity. And RAC 2026 has further strengthened what seemed, even before, to be unbreakable.

The end of the program isn’t the end of the story.

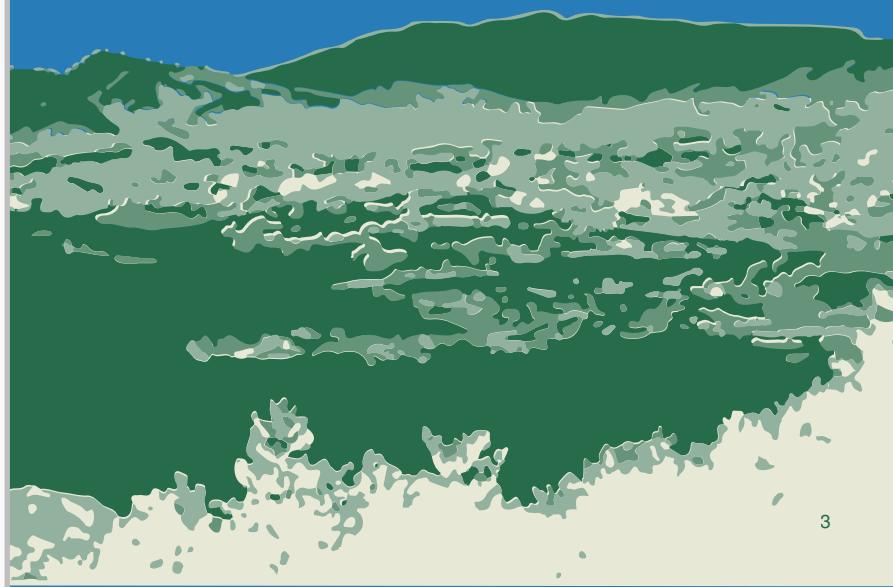
USCAEF is closing. This is the conclusion no one wanted to reach. But everyone we spoke with agrees on one thing: the program achieved what it set out to do. It gave people more than just an education—it gave them each other. And that is something that can never be taken away. Two alumni, Sezim and Sitor, are proof of this. For them, the people from USCAEF will always remain close, trusted, and “family.” Being part of this story is a privilege, because not everyone is destined to meet such like-minded people. What USCAEF creates, first and foremost, is a strong, unbreakable bond between more than 400 people. Every current scholarship recipient speaks passionately about the program, and every graduate proudly says that they once graduated from AUCA or KIMEP thanks to this opportunity.

Greetings from Geneva

This month, I had the opportunity to visit the United Nations office in Geneva, Switzerland, and deeply engage in all its procedures. I improved my knowledge by learning more about the existing Human Rights Protection Mechanisms and how one can effectively use them. I also got a better understanding of the UN's Special Procedures and how we can refer to them in different cases. The most memorable part was visiting the Universal Periodic Review and observing the way decisions are made inside that famous room. I had a lot of questions on how the UPR session is usually organized, but after visiting it by myself, I got responses to most of my questions. The insight that I got after attending the UPR is that all those representatives and diplomats in strict suits are, after all, human beings who are open to dialogue and discussion, and they can share good advice related to this career. While walking at the Palais des Nations, I still wasn't able to realize that I was indeed there and everything around me was real. I am truly grateful for this opportunity and to my advisor, professors, and department for sharing it with me.

Besides my studies during this period of time, I also found time to explore the city of Geneva and see some popular places. Right in front of the United Nations Office, there is the world-famous Broken Chair Sculpture, which stays through decades as a reminder of the campaign against landmines. At the city center, there is a bridge that crosses Lake Geneva, which is also known as Lake Léman. This place attracts all the residents and tourists not only for its bright blue water but also because of the popular Jet d'Eau fountain. The place that has stolen my heart is definitely the old town; this place not only includes modern buildings but also has cathedrals that hold the memory of the past. I had a deep emotional connection with this place that is hard to explain, but I believe it comes from one's understanding that centuries ago, these buildings also existed but saw a completely different world. Last but not least, it would have been a crime not to try the Swiss chocolate while being in Switzerland, so I took the opportunity from this experience as well. This trip of mine as a freshman will forever be in my heart, and I will recall those beautiful days that I have spent in Geneva.

Saranjomova Farah
LAS-125



Teaching at the “Detskii Kovcheg Nadejdy” Orphanage

This semester, my classmate and I volunteered at the “Detskii Kovcheg Nadejdy” orphanage and worked with seventh and sixth-grade students. Every Saturday, we organized English lessons for them as part of the AUCA leadership program, led by Professor E. Galimova. We wanted the classes to be more interesting than regular school lessons, so we included speaking activities, small games, and teamwork exercises to help the students feel more confident using English.

In the beginning, the students were very quiet and did not communicate much with us. It took time to make them feel comfortable, but after several weeks, they became more active and open. They started participating more during lessons, asking questions, and sharing their opinions. Seeing this change was one of the most rewarding parts of the project for me.

Each Saturday, we also brought fruits and pastries for the children. After the lessons, we stayed with them to play different games and spend time together. These activities helped us build a closer connection with the students. I noticed that even simple things like conversations, jokes, or playing together could make them happier and more relaxed.

This experience taught me many important things. I learned how to communicate better with children, how to stay patient, and how to adapt when something does not go as planned. Sometimes it was difficult to keep everyone focused, but these situations helped me become more responsible and creative during the lessons.

For me, this project was not only about teaching English. It was also about giving attention, support, and kindness to children who need it. Spending every Saturday at the orphanage became a very meaningful experience that I will remember for a long time.

Aiana Ashiralieva & Madina Abdubaetova
BA-124

Community Building and Healthy Boundaries: An Afghan Girl Student’s Reflection

Community building is a quiet yet powerful art, an intentional act of bringing people together through shared values, experiences, and mutual care, whether in classrooms, neighborhoods, workplaces, or even digital spaces. It is not simply about gathering people in one place but about creating a sense of belonging where individuals feel seen, heard, and valued. A strong community grows through consistent effort, open communication, and collaboration, where each person contributes their voice, skills, and presence to form a network of trust and support. In education, community can be nurtured by encouraging inclusive dialogue, respecting diverse perspectives, and creating safe spaces where students and educators feel comfortable expressing themselves; simple acts like listening without judgment, supporting peers, or organizing collaborative activities can transform a classroom into a meaningful community. In society, this extends further through kindness, participation, and a willingness to connect, greeting others, engaging in shared efforts, and embracing diversity, all of which strengthen the social fabric. The importance of community lies in its ability to reduce isolation, provide emotional and practical support, and empower individuals to face challenges together while fostering growth, creativity, and understanding. Yet, for a community to truly thrive, healthy boundaries must exist alongside connection; these boundaries are not barriers but respectful guidelines that protect individual well-being and ensure that participation remains voluntary, safe, and balanced. They allow people to express their limits, say no without fear, and maintain their identity while still belonging to a larger whole. Clear expectations, mutual respect, and accountability help prevent harm and build deeper trust, while flexibility ensures the community can adapt and remain inclusive. In essence, community building is a shared responsibility shaped by small, intentional actions where connection is nurtured, individuality is respected, and people come together not by losing themselves but by finding strength, purpose, and belonging within one another. As an Afghan girl, I see community as both a source of strength and a space where I must protect my voice and identity; in my journey, I have learned that healthy relationships within a community mean respecting traditions while also honoring personal boundaries, speaking up with courage, and supporting others without losing myself. For me, true community is where I can grow, learn, and contribute freely; where respect flows both ways; and where being part of something larger does not silence who I am but helps me become more of whom I aspire to be.

Hafasa Yousufzai
Alumna '25

My Berlin Semester: Being First

There is something quietly exciting about being first. No ceremony, no announcement - you simply arrive and realize that no one from your country has stood in this exact place before. That was me at Freie Universität Berlin in the spring of 2024. The first exchange student from AUCA. The first Kyrgyz student in the university's history. A small fact that gave the entire experience an extra layer of meaning. The academic environment was unlike anything I had encountered before. Freie Universität operates on a principle of intellectual independence - professors open the door, but the curiosity has to be yours. What made it genuinely exciting was the people teaching. Researchers, consultants, and authors whose work I had encountered in reading lists back in Bishkek - now standing in front of me, sharing not just knowledge but the thinking behind it. That kind of exposure changes how you approach a subject. It stopped feeling like studying and started feeling like a conversation.

But the semester was far more than academics.

Being the only Kyrgyz student meant there was no ready-made community waiting, which turned out to be one of the best things about the experience. I built friendships from scratch with people from Korea, Spain, Russia, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. What started as casual conversations between classes became a tight, genuinely fun group of people who were all equally determined not to waste a single weekend in Europe. We traveled constantly. Over the semester, I visited more than ten countries - some trips planned weeks in advance, others decided on a Thursday evening for the following morning. Later in the summer, friends from home began arriving in Germany for internships and conferences, and we took full advantage - crossing borders together, seeing cities neither of us had imagined visiting so soon. It was the kind of freedom that feels specific to that window of life when your schedule is still flexible enough to say yes to almost anything.

Berlin itself was a world of its own. The city is extraordinarily diverse - walking through its neighborhoods, you hear dozens of languages, encounter food from every corner of the globe, and feel the quiet coexistence of cultures that have somehow found a rhythm together. That atmosphere is not accidental; Berlin wears its internationalism openly and proudly. Nowhere was this more vivid than at the Karneval der Kulturen - the annual Carnival of Cultures - one of the largest street festivals in Germany, where the entire city pours into the streets in a celebration of music, color, and every imaginable cultural tradition. Standing in that crowd, surrounded by that energy, I remember thinking that this is what a truly open city feels like. I explored Berlin thoroughly - its museums, its neighborhoods, its contradictions. And beyond the capital, I traveled across Germany from north to south, from the Baltic coast to the Bavarian Alps, seeing how much variety a single country can hold. Each city felt like a new chapter.



One memory I always come back to: the annual Campus Run. Five kilometers, midsummer Berlin, 37 degrees. I am not a runner by any stretch, but I finished - somewhere between exhausted and oddly proud - surrounded by students from every part of the world, all of us laughing at the heat and at ourselves. It was a small moment, but it captured something essential about that semester: joyful, slightly ridiculous, and completely alive.

As I reach the end of my undergraduate years at AUCA, this semester stands apart. Not just because of where I was, but because of whom I became in the process - more adaptable, more genuinely curious, more comfortable with uncertainty. The experience confirmed something I now believe deeply: that discomfort and growth tend to arrive together, and that the moments that stretch you the most are usually the ones worth chasing. I am sincerely grateful to the LAS department and SILC for making this opportunity possible, to my family for their constant support, and to every friend - in Berlin and beyond - who made this chapter so rich.

To every AUCA student reading this: whatever opportunity feels just slightly out of reach right now - apply for it anyway. You are more ready than you think.



Eldar Aibekov
LAS-SE 122

Peer Advisors' Experiences at AUCA

I began my journey as a Peer Advisor (PA) last fall because I have always found joy in mentoring and sharing knowledge. However, soon I realized that being a PA is not just about giving directions; it is about empathy. I remember a student approaching me, being completely lost in the credit system. This reminded me of my own first year, when my brain worked harder to calculate those credits than during any final exam. But when the student finally understood their checklists, seeing that sparkling eye moment of realization made me feel like I was contributing something meaningful to the AUCA community. You are not alone in the thorny path of acquiring knowledge! Everyone starts from the beginning, and to get the maximum benefit from AUCA, I recommend that students be active both inside and outside the classroom. Professors notice when you are engaged, and that involvement usually leads to more and unexpected opportunities. If you are naturally shy or nervous to speak up in a lecture or seminar, my advice is simple: close your eyes for a few seconds and just say what you think. Do not be afraid to ask "stupid" questions. As my father always says, "Someone who does not ask foolish questions will never say anything wise." Your voice matters! Lastly, being involved in different projects and maintaining a high GPA requires good time management skills. I personally use Google and Apple Calendars and always set reminders. I also rely on the Notes app for listing my tasks. The feeling of crossing them off one by one gives a sense of accomplishment and pride that keeps you going. Submit your assignments on time, stay involved in the community, and remember that Rome was not built in a day!

Nuraiym Asanova
ESCS-124

I became a Peer Advisor during my senior year, but my understanding of its important meaning improved much earlier. A year before that, I was volunteering during Orientation Week, and I noticed that many freshmen were struggling with their schedules and adapting to university life. At that time, there were no Peer Advisors, so many students came to me with questions, and I did my best to help them. Later, many of them thanked me, and that was the moment I realized how important it is to have someone nearby who can explain things and support you in a completely new academic environment. Because of this experience and my active involvement in student life, I was later invited to join the Peer Advisor team. Throughout this year, I have supported students with scheduling, explained the credit system, and introduced them to many opportunities AUCA offers. I am truly glad that I could be someone they could rely on.

As a senior, my biggest advice to students to get the maximum out of their student journey is simple: do not limit yourself to classes only. During my four years here, I have been actively involved in student life, which has given me some of the best experiences of my university years. I volunteered for Student Life Office events, participated in Orientation Weeks, was part of the Dance Theater Mirrors for four years, and received the Mirrors Alumni Scholarship in 2024. I founded the AUCA eSport Club, which has grown to more than 100 members and has become a space where students can connect through shared interests, teamwork, and leadership. In addition, I worked as a mentor and coordinator in the TIFE project, helping school students develop their ideas, and my team was the winner. Experiences like these taught me that AUCA is not only a place to study, but also a place where you can discover yourself, build confidence, develop leadership, and create projects that bring people together.

My recommendation for keeping both a strong academic and social standing at AUCA is to learn how to balance responsibility with involvement. Be organized, plan your semester early, understand your degree requirements, and never hesitate to ask questions when something is unclear. At the same time, join clubs, attend events, meet new people, and try things outside your comfort zone. AUCA gives students an incredible environment full of academic, creative, and leadership opportunities, but it is up to you to take that first step. In my experience, the students who gain the most from AUCA are those who stay curious, active, and open to new experiences. University years pass quickly, so make them meaningful. I advise you to make connections and not be afraid to participate because some of the most important lessons happen outside the classroom.

Serdar Urustemov
LAS-122



Нина Чернышнёва

Всё началось в детстве с рубрики «Дисней по пятницам». Я смотрела на детей-актеров, которые попадали в невероятные приключения, и думала: «Господи, как я хочу так же! Наверное, нужно попасть на киностудию, где взрослые создают эти миры». К восьми годам ко мне пришло четкое осознание: актерская профессия это универсальный ключ. Сегодня я могу быть судьей и бороться за справедливость, завтра врачом, послезавтра кем угодно. Я была «правильной» девочкой, хорошо училась, и когда говорила, что хочу в актрисы, мне отвечали: «Иди учись, не майся дурью». Мне мешала скромность, но когда пришло время поступать, я поняла: либо я сейчас наступлю скромности на горло, либо не поступлю никуда.

Когда отправилась поступать на актрису, мама поддержала меня, хотя изначально относилась к идее скептически. А когда мне удалось поступить в Институт Искусств на актрису, да еще и на бюджет, папа, узнав об этом, был категорически против такого поворота. Он любил искусство, но только если на сцене не его дочь. Когда я поступила на бюджет, он сказал: «Это несерьезно. Я не дам денег на проживание в городе. Поступай на нормальную профессию». В итоге я училась параллельно в двух вузах. Для папы я закончила политологию, а для себя актерский. Это было безумное время. Экзамены в обоих институтах часто совпадали. Я засыпала стоя в автобусе, проезжала свои остановки, писала доклады по ночам от руки. Иногда я спала прямо на лекциях, а рука продолжала что-то писать «автоматом». Сейчас диплом политолога лежит на полке, а папа до сих пор иногда спрашивает: «Может, ты еще на что-нибудь выучишься?» Но я себя чувствую в своей профессии прекрасно.

Для меня актерство это возможность прожить множество жизней и побывать в разных эпохах. В одном спектакле я медсестра, в другом герцогиня в пышном платье. Это настолько яркое проживание, что рутина просто исчезает. Мои друзья удивляются, почему я не помню события двухлетней давности. А я не помню, потому что у меня каждый день столько впечатлений, что одно закрывает другое. Актеры это счастливые люди, которые нашли себя.

Совмещаю театр с личной жизнью я, честно говоря, плохо. Мне кажется, что 24 часа стали короче, чем раньше. Домашние смотрят на меня как на неупутевую, меня никогда нет дома. Даже когда я возвращаюсь, я продолжаю прорабатывать образы: как мой персонаж себя ведет, какие у него манеры. Текст роли выучивается на сцене, но монологи это тяжелая домашняя работа. Окружающие, не связанные с театром, часто от этого устают. Мой папа, например, до сих пор ворчит, когда видит меня на сцене: «То тебя за волосы таскают, то тиранят... Позор какой!» А сын, хоть и не признается при мне, где-то в глубине души, думаю, гордится.

Если человек сомневается, идти ли в актеры, мой совет один: пробуйте. На актерский курс могут поступить 27 человек, а до финиша дойти пятеро. Кто-то понимает, что не готов подчиняться режиссеру, кто-то ломается внутренне. В нашей профессии два пути: либо тебя «зажмут» и сломают психику (тогда ты уйдешь травмированным), либо сломают твои внутренние зажимы и раскрепостят. Во втором случае ты начнешь получать настоящий кайф.

Актеры театра это фанатики, работающие за гроши. Но искусство возвращает всё с лихвой через эмоции. Чтобы вы ни хотели выучить язык, поменять профессию или выйти на сцену - пробуйте. Вернуться всегда можно, а вот жалеть о неиспользованном шансе придется долго.



Эгем Урматбек Уулу

Мой путь начался не совсем обычно. В седьмом классе я был тренером в Центре защиты детей, а в восьмом попал в «Тамашоу» (это как кыргызский КВН). Мы с командой заняли второе место в сезоне. Именно тогда я понял, что хочу заниматься сценическим мастерством профессионально, хотя на тот момент даже не представлял, что существует такая профессия «актёр».

Я мечтал быть пилотом. После девятого класса пошёл в авиационное училище, но там не оказалось мест. И вот иду я по площади Ала-Тоо, дохожу до парка Панфилова и вижу здание театра. Рядом стояли абитуриенты. Я спросил их: «Кем вы будете после учебы?», а они ответили: «Мы будем известными людьми, актерами кино!» И я подумал: «Ё-маё, именно это мне и нужно!» На второй день принёс документы в училище при Кыргыздрамтеатре и поступил на бюджет. На экзамене директор спросил, умею ли я петь. Я начал что-то современное, но он попросил кыргызскую песню. И я вдруг вспомнил, как пел мой папа... так всё и началось.

Жизнь актера иногда бывает трудной и даже болезненной, если это твой единственный источник дохода. Но без этой работы мне просто скучно, я не представляю свою жизнь без неё. Знаете, многие люди утром просыпаются и вяло говорят: «Ой, опять на работу...» А я встаю бодро: «Мне пора на работу!» Для меня это не просто «служба», это путешествия, интересные занятия и каждый день что-то новое. В каждом спектакле ты не просто играешь, ты проживаешь жизнь своего героя.



Что такое театр для меня? **Театр - это другая вселенная, другой мир.** Он существует отдельно от всей внешней суесть. И актеры, и зрители, приходя сюда, полностью погружаются в эту иную реальность.

У актеров все занято театром. Мы постоянно проверяем память физических действий, как вес тарелки, сопротивление мочалки. Мы наблюдаем. Видишь прохожего на улице, улавливаешь его характер, походку и пытаешься сохранить это в голове, скопировать, чтобы тело запомнило. Потом приходишь к зеркалу и ищешь в себе эти новые черты лица или движения.

Совмещать театр с личной жизнью очень сложно. Иногда она просто пропадает, потому что мы работаем здесь и днём, и ночью. Понедельник, наш законный выходной, но если завтра спектакль, который мы давно не играли, мы всё равно приезжаем и репетируем. Просто по собственному желанию, ради искусства, потому что не хотим «ляпнуть» на сцене.

Если вы хотите в эту профессию только ради славы - не надо. Жизнь актера суровая. Я играл собачку в «Питер Пене». Приходится играть и собак, и червей, и пауков, работать сутками напролёт ради одного момента. Но этот аплодисмент в конце, это всё. Это та отдача от зрителя, которая перекрывает все трудности.

Бегайым Абдыраева

В актёрскую сферу я попала случайно. Я хотела стать банкиром, это была моя школьная мечта. Мне очень нравилась офисная одежда, строгость. Даже сейчас, когда я знакоюсь с людьми, многие думают, что я работаю в банке, в юриспруденции или в педагогике. Никто с ходу не скажет, что я - актриса.

В 2013 я поступала в университеты и случайно увидела кастинг в университете «Манас». Решила подать, прошла все туры и поняла: «во мне что-то есть». Так я влюбилась в эту профессию. Во время учебы нас очень сплотил наш декан, Аман Жапаров. Он говорил: «Вы одна семья, вы все мои дети». Наверное, из-за этой теплоты и сплоченности я и осталась.

В 2019 я ушла в декрет на пять лет. После долгого перерыва возвращение было тяжелым. Казалось, что я безнадежно отстала. Когда ты долго сидишь в декрете, творческая часть души очень страдает. Но когда я вернулась, я почувствовала, что потеряла всё: ни речи, ни посылы, ни артикуляции, ни внутренней органики. Я была как заблокированный телефон. Внутри жили только самоконтроль, страх и тревожность. Я ужасно себя чувствовала, думала: «Всё, я увольусь, моё время прошло». Однако поддержка коллег и семьи мне помогла. Каждый день на репетициях я сбрасывала с себя по чуть-чуть: в один день страх, в другой, суесть. В итоге я справилась.

С маленькими детьми работать тяжелее всего, из-за нехватки времени. Несемейные актеры свободны, а мне нужно собрать детей, отвезти в садик, забрать... Вечером, когда возвращаешься домой, ты не можешь просто сесть и учить текст. Начинается: «Мама! Мама!», нужно готовить, убирать, совмещать быт и семью. Но я всё равно работаю над собой. Например, развешиваю белье, останавливаюсь и проговариваю текст: «Может, здесь вот так сказать? А может, так повернуться?» Мою посуду и репетирую. Пока дети спят в тихий час или рано утром, пока они еще не проснулись - это моё время для ролей.



Дети уже привыкли. Младшему очень нравится спектакль «Маугли», где я играю. Он выучил все танцы, знает всех персонажей, знает, кто за кем выходит. По выходным, когда садик не работает, я беру детей с собой в театр на репетиции. Я повторяю текст, они смеются, я танцую, они повторяют за мной. Для них моя работа это интересный мир.

Внешность важна. Нужно следить за кожей, за фигурой, даже за волосами. В кино можно пройти кастинг с крашеными волосами, а в театре нельзя, поэтому я никогда не крашу волосы и сейчас снова их отраставаю после декрета. Актёрская карьера в театре очень короткая. Мне сейчас тридцать. Внешность пока позволяет играть молодых героинь, но сорокалетняя женщина уже не сможет сыграть Джульетту. Возраст всё равно выдает, поэтому, пока есть время, нужно выкладываться на сто процентов.

Театр - это «агартуу» (просвещение). Мы должны не просто развлекать, а образовывать людей, показывать на живом примере, что хорошо, а что плохо. Это огромная ответственность перед зрителем.

Если кто-то хочет стать актёром, нужно заглянуть вглубь себя и задать один вопрос: «Смогу ли я?» В театральном мире нужно именно выжить. И я сейчас не про интриги, в нашей среде люди в основном добрые и открытые, всегда поддержат советом. Выжить нужно внутри себя. Нельзя бросать свою мечту из-за маленькой зарплаты (хотя это большая проблема) или отсутствия ролей. Я всегда говорю себе: «Я пришла сюда ради себя, ради своей мечты». Если ты любишь театр так, что твоя душа без него страдает, то нужно идти до конца, несмотря на быт, трудности и страхи. Когда я заново обрела театр, мне стало намного легче жить. Это и есть любовь.

Роман Хузин



В театре «МЕСТО Д...» все строится на «дружеском вайбе» и любви. В нашем театре мы говорим с сегодняшним человеком о сегодняшнем дне, фокусируясь на проблемах города и региона. Это необычно, мы не входим в привычную систему театров. Над нами никто не стоит, и это дает свободу экспериментировать: мы можем выпустить один спектакль в год, а можем сорок, использовать нестандартные форматы и «переизобретать» театр. Это действительно интересная работа. Нашу постоянную лидерскую команду составляют шесть человек. Они формируют планы на год и решают сложные организационные вопросы. Вокруг этого ядра существует «облако друзей», около 20 человек, которых мы приглашаем под конкретные проекты. Это наш способ жизни и чувства. Мы занимаемся театром из-за неадекватной любви к делу. Наверное если у меня его забрать, я буду искать возможность его вернуть. В какой-то момент приходит осознание, что на молекулярном уровне я уже не мыслю себя без этого дела.

У нас горизонтальная структура. Мы не можем диктовать условия или выкупать всё время артистов, потому что у нас нет таких бюджетов. Мы выстраиваем сложные графики: кто-то может в среду, кто-то в пятницу. Большинство наших актеров параллельно снимаются в кино, озвучивают книги, преподают сценическое движение или актерское мастерство. Мы постоянно экспериментируем с форматами.

Наши возможности и навыки могут легко быть воплощены в разных формах, начиная от классического сценического действия, скажем так, и до мобильного приложения «театр в телефоне» с несколькими аудио променадями, это спектакль с аудиодорожкой, кафе ощущений «Улитка», где зритель садится за стол, делает заказ, к нему подходит артист, и происходит индивидуальное взаимодействие. Нам нравится создавать то, чего еще не было в нашем опыте.

Okeana Orozova, Bektur Myrzakulov & Artur Han
ТСМА-123



What Chess Taught Us at Aidanek Children's Reintegration Center

In my SYS course, I got the opportunity to gain a new experience: to visit an orphanage and help children learn something new. Together with my classmates, Khusnidin and Jibek, we decided to try this activity and bring something useful to society. Before our first visit, we spent some time thinking about what could be both interesting and useful for children in such a place. First, we've got an idea of teaching the history of games from all over the world, but we've decided it was too much information and wouldn't be interesting with such a limited time frame. Then, an idea we came up with was board games, with a main focus on chess. We chose chess because it improves critical thinking and teaches a person to analyze the situation on the board before making a move. It is not only a game but also a good exercise for patience, logic, and attention.

When we arrived at the orphanage, at first, the administration was unsure whether they had time for such activities. The director told us that there was not much time for additional lessons and that we should probably come later. However, after some discussion and explanation of our goals, we reached an agreement. We were allowed to come every Friday at 4:30. It was not much time, but at least it was something. Right away, we started our first lesson. The orphanage gave us access to a classroom, and around 10–12 children came to participate. They were of different ages, from around 8 to 16 years old, but most of them were under 13. This age gap made the lesson a bit challenging because it was hard to control everyone's attention at the same time. Also, many children did not know even the basic rules of chess, so we had to start from the beginning. Because of this, each of us was teaching 2–3 children at the same time. It was quite challenging because we did not have much teaching experience before. It was also difficult to explain the rules, answer questions, and play on several chessboards at once. However, we managed it well; we started to focus on the children who were behaving well, and then others started to behave as well. The children were listening, asking questions, and playing with interest. Even though the process was not easy, the result was satisfying because we could see that they were curious and wanted to learn. This experience might also help me as a future software engineer. Through interaction with children, I understood their interests and psychology better. This can be useful if I ever develop applications or educational games for children, because I will have a better understanding of what can make them interested and involved. Overall, visiting the orphanage was a valuable experience for me. I am glad that we decided to participate in this activity, because it helped us not only to teach something but also to learn something ourselves. Therefore, I want to express special gratitude to Professor Galimova for providing this opportunity and supporting us throughout the course.

Amin Kubanychbekov
SFW-125

As part of our course's extra activity, my two friends Amin and Jibek organized a chess club at Aidanek Children's Reintegration Center in Bishkek. The center works with children who have faced difficult life situations. Our project lasted for twelve weeks, with one-hour lessons every Friday. At the very beginning, we thought that only teaching the chess rules would be enough; soon, we realized that the real challenge was to gain children's attention, build trust, and create a calm learning class. During the first lessons, it was difficult to keep the children focused. Around 10–12 children usually attended each session, from 8 to 17 years old. Many of the children made noise, were distracted, and moved around the room by interrupting the lesson. They did not take us seriously at the beginning, because we were strangers to them. So, we decided to be patient and consistent and use the right approach, instead of becoming strict. We came up with a new approach; we started talking to the kids in a calm way, starting with small achievements and gifting chocolates for it, and explaining what they did wrong without criticizing. Slowly, we showed that chess is not only a boring lesson but also a fun game to play. We played short games, set them small goals, and gave them little challenges so they would feel like they were winning and learning something. So slowly, the kids got more comfortable around us; they started to listen more carefully and showed more interest. We were happy to see them open up and start learning chess.

We think that chess is not only a game but also a useful life skill. By teaching them chess, we also taught them patience, decision-making, and logical thinking. They learned that every move has consequences and that it is important to think before acting. They have also learned how to respect opponents, no matter what, by shaking hands at the end of the game, regardless of the result of the game. For children who often struggle with self-control, these skills are very useful in daily life. Not every child could concentrate for a full hour, so we came up with a better strategy. We started to focus more intensively on kids who showed a strong interest. As a result of this project, eight children learned the basics of chess, and five began to play quite well.

Our contribution to society was small but meaningful. We gave the children our time, attention, knowledge, and emotional support. We created a safe learning space where they could feel capable and respected. Not only have we contributed, but we also have gained from this project; we learned patience, leadership, and most importantly, how to approach kids and make them learn. My friends and I, after making retrospectives, have found for us that leadership is not only about giving instructions but also about listening, adapting, and continuing to help when things get difficult.

Khusnidin Kurbanov
SFW-125



What I Learned from Teaching Math to Children at the SOS Village



Back in February, I started giving kids at the “SOS Village” math classes. It is a center for orphaned kids, where they are able to go to kindergartens and get an education like everybody else their age. The groups there are mixed, however. Kids from regular families attend this place as well. On the other hand, I had two groups: the older one and the middle one. From February until May, I was teaching them new things regarding math that were not included in their regular program. My role was to provide them with a new, entertaining, and conventional easy side of math. Before starting, since I had no experience with either teaching, I had no expectations for them at all. However, I only started thinking of participating in this project because I have always had this feeling of love and patience towards kids. I do not think I would have enjoyed classes this much if I did not. After deciding I wanted to participate, I started thinking of types of classes I could hold. Math, English, and even Toguz Korgool. I had plenty of choices, but I chose Math in the end. I do believe Math is the most important subject children can have in schools or kindergartens. Math remains important even in higher education. Not to mention, Math education is essential and necessary in order for kids to develop certain skills regarding strategic abilities, IQ, and decision-making. This was my reason.

During my teaching period, I noticed many interesting things regarding kids' behavior. They were mainly aged 4 to 6, and I believe this is one of the most challenging ages to teach. Children at the orphanage were very easily distracted and hard to get attention from. The constant screaming and crying were making me unsure lots of the time, to be honest. However, for some reason, I never felt overwhelmed or frustrated with them. I guess I prepared myself a long time ago. They were all also very tactile. Random hugs while standing at the desk and trying to teach them something stopped surprising me starting from the second class. Some kids were very easily managed, and others were extremely hard to get to listen to. Most of them, however, were well-behaved. Initially, I started classes from the technical side. I was explaining to them things proper for their age and was treating classes very formally. However, I started noticing that they are bored, and the program was still somehow hard for them. This was when I shifted my plan towards a more entertaining side, and suddenly, kids were much better behaved and got more engaged. I stopped using the desk to explain things and, instead, gave kids pieces of paper where they could do it all: learn, color, and remember. I also implemented games into our routine. This way, I could easily get their attention and keep them throughout the whole session.

I genuinely think this experience has made me love kids even more and made me more patient. My expectations were, in fact, a little different, but I think everything still turned out well. I now see myself working with kids and would definitely do it all over again.

*Zhunosova Cholponai
LAS-123*

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