CCE Newsletter

Welcome to the CCE Newsletter, in which we cover updates of the Center's activities and initiatives, upcoming events and opportunities!

CENTER FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

CCE Media Fellows

In Fall 2022, in order to promote civic engagement culture at AUCA and across the OSUN Network the Center for Civic Engagement decided to launch a new initiative - **CCE Media Fellows**!

CCE Media Fellows are AUCA students who engage in matters of public concern and create media materials (i.e., articles, documentaries) about various community-based initiatives of regular citizens of Kyrgyzstan. The idea is to raise awareness about such initiatives and thus encourage our community to become more socially responsible and civically engaged.

This 2022-2023 AY, **Salima Almazbekova (JMC)** and **Alina Baitokova (TCMA)** became the first Media Fellows at the Center for Civic Engagement.

To take a look at the third issue of our Media Fellows, please, follow the links below ⬇️

Article: “It took a long time and many years to break discriminating stereotypes.”

auca.kg

Interview with Seinep Dyikanbaeva - Kyrgyz Lawyer for the Rights of People with Disabilities

youtu.be

Afghan Civic Engagement Program

In Spring 2023, ACEP approved 14 student projects (6 local, 8 international):

- **"GreenHive Project"** by Amir Khan Babaei, Kyrgyzstan
- **"No limit to education" (2nd round)** by Arezu Kawah, Afghanistan (online)
- **"Persian Cultural Festival" (2nd round)** by Bashir Ahmad Noori, Kyrgyzstan
- **"Conflict Transformation in Central Asia and Afghanistan for youth"** by Halima Tora, Kyrgyzstan
- **"Debate on Digital Literacy (DDL)"** by Hawa Taban, Afghanistan
- **"Empowering Afghan Girls Through Education"** by Lima Habib, Afghanistan (online)
- **"Skill Enhancement for Teachers Development (SETD)"** by Mahmonir Amini & Hawa Taban, Afghanistan
- **"Kaaj Girls Educational Program" (2nd round)** by Milad Yaqubi & Ghulam Sakhi Ataye, Afghanistan (online)
- **"Climate change matters (for Afghan refugees in Kyrgyzstan)"** by Mursal Jamal, Kyrgyzstan
- **"Batken Student Leaders"** by Roona Farahi, Kyrgyzstan
- **"Smart Plan to Study Abroad"** by Jamila Jamal, Kyrgyzstan

- **"Digital Literacy for Social Development"** by Kobra Soltani, Afghanistan (online)
- **"Mental Health Awareness"** by Shahnaz Haidary, Afghanistan (online)
- **"Fanos - Scholarship info session for Afghan students"** by Tamanna Nasiri, Afghanistan

** Note: From Spring 2023, the **Afghan Civic Engagement Program (ACEP)** started accepting applications from Afghan master-level students (NOFO)*

OSUN Experiential Learning Pedagogy Grant

Within the framework of OSUN, CCE and Social Sciences Division of AUCA (**Dr. Jarkyn Shadymanova** & **Dr. Görkem Atsungur**) organized a series of Experiential Learning Workshops for our faculty and staff.

The mission of the ELI is to foster, promote, and explore the pedagogy of experiential learning by expanding course offering that connect student's classroom experiences with their local communities to enhance learning and promote co-curricular engagement.

As a result of the workshops, the following 3 course proposals were chosen to be supported with the $1000 USD grants in Fall 2023:

- **"Photography & Creativity"** course by Zanré Reed (TCMA)
- **"The Theory of Probabilities and Mathematical Statistics"** course by Polina Dolmatova (MAT)
- **"International Development and Cross-Cultural Communication"** course by Yumi Takahashi (ANTH)

** Note: Please, be reminded that AUCA faculty can also apply for another similar opportunity - OSUN Community Engagement & Experiential Learning Grants by June 9, 2023 (to learn more, please, scroll down towards the end of this newsletter ⬇️)*

Fatima Club

In the academic year of 2022-2023, the Center for Civic Engagement decided to open the **"Fatima" club** to the whole AUCA community.

On March 17, 2023, CCE held the last club session for 2022-23 AY. The session focused on CV & Cover Letter writing tips shared by **Zainab Amirzai**, AUCA student with relevant job experience in different international organizations.

Europe Summer Festival 2023

On May 27, 2023, AUCA together with TSI college and the French-Kyrgyz Ecotourism Association (AFKE) participated in **the Europe Summer Festival 2023** organized by **the European Delegation in Kyrgyzstan**. The festival allowed participants and guests to experience the atmosphere of European culture, trade, cuisine, and music.

AUCA was represented by the Center for Civic Engagement in the Green Hub, where they talked about projects, grants and programs at the university level and many more. In particular, such projects as the AUCA Sustainable Program, the joint "Eco Park" project and the Green AUCA program were presented.

The CCE staff conducted an interactive quiz for the guests of the festival with questions on waste management, climate change and sustainable development, awarded prizes with AUCA symbols for correct answers, shared interesting and useful information, talked about eco-projects and eco-activities of the Center and AUCA as a whole.

Europe Summer Fest 2023

On Saturday, May 27th, 2023, AUCA and TSI participated in the Europe summer fest 2023, which was held in Yntymak Park. The festival allowed many to experience the atmosphere of European culture, trade, cuisine, and music...

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D. Otorbaev's Book Presentation

Central Asia's Economic Rebirth in the Shadow of the New Great Game

AUCA hosted the former Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan, Otorbaev Djoomart Kaipovich, on Thursday, April 12. He presented his book "Central Asia's Economic Rebirth in the Shadow of the New Great Game."

auca.kg

On April 27, 2023, the Center for Civic Engagement together with AUCA Library organized the presentation of the book **"Central Asia's Economic Rebirth in the Shadow of the New Great Game"** by **Djoomart Kaipovich Otorbaev**, the former Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The book is about the economic development of Central Asian countries, their past experiences and future prospects. According to Djoomart Otorbaev, the future of Central Asia is excellent and promising.

The event was open to everyone, and attracted young people from different institutions beyond AUCA, such as OSCE academy, Kyrgyz State University named after I. Arabaev, Salymbekov Business School, etc.

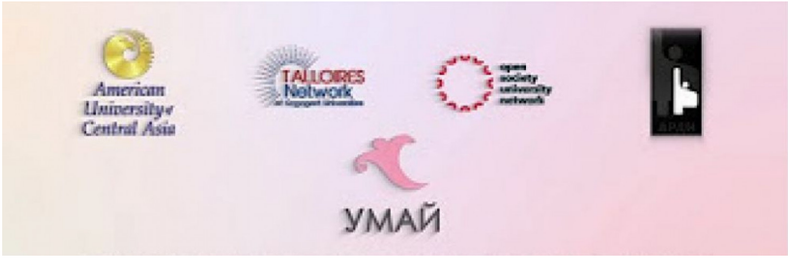
"Umai" Project Presentation for Parents of Children with Disabilities

On April 28, 2023, the Center for Civic Engagement organized the open presentation of the project **"Empowering Parents of Children with Disabilities"** (alternative title: "Umai") that aims to support and empower parents of children with special needs via the development of short informational video modules in four thematic areas: **psychological support**, **communication with one's child**, **legal support** and **financial literacy**. Unfortunately, due to the existent stigma surrounding the topic of disabilities in Kyrgyzstan, parents oftentimes may refrain from seeking help; therefore, the present project's goal is to tackle this issue by providing free informational videos on the aforementioned topics that were voiced to be the most crucial ones by the parents during the needs assessment analysis.

The project was initiated in 2022 by **Nurzhamal Karamoldoeva**, CCE's Executive Director, and conducted in cooperation with the public association of parents of children with disabilities **"ARDI."**

The project is **supported by the OSUN/Talloires Network Engaged Research Fund.**

To watch the modules, please, follow the link bellow ⬇️



Видеомодули "Умай" для родителей детей с инвалидностью

Главная цель проекта "Поддержка родителей детей с инвалидностью" - поддержать и расширить возможности родителей посредством разработки коротких информационных видеомодулей...

youtube.com

Green AUCA

Green April: II 6R Fest, ecotour in the eco-house, workshop on processing receipts

During **Green April**, within the framework of the Green AUCA program, the Center for Civic Engagement held several environmental events aimed at popularizing the principles of waste management not only on campus, but also in everyday life, as well as more conscious behavior, attitude to shopping, everyday micro-activities, food, etc.: the 2nd 6R Fest, where local eco-producers and hand-made craftswomen took part, a fair for the exchange of clothes and books (i.e., darmarka), 3 workshops with experts, an award ceremony and a concert for the Sustainable Art & Design competition, an ecotour in the eco-house in Lebedinovka village (with a practical workshop on composting at home), a workshop on the processing of receipts, which was organized jointly with the eco startup Paper2U.

The eco-festival and ecotour were held **with the support of the Kyrgyz-German-Swiss GIZ program "Green economy and sustainable development of the private sector in the Kyrgyz Republic."** The events were attended not only by the AUCA community, but also by students and teachers from other universities, schoolchildren, residents of Bishkek.

AUCA is among Green Waste Leaders-2023

On May 19, AUCA confirmed the environmental certification of **"Best Recycle Practice,"** demonstrating that our university this year for the 2nd time passed voluntary environmental certification in the Waste Management Network of the Kyrgyz Republic **WasteNet.kg** and confirmed compliance with the requirements of eco-labeling under the Green AUCA program.

Eco-challenge from Green AUCA & LAS department: awarding the winners

In May, the Green AUCA program held a 2-week challenge aimed at introducing 7 useful eco-habits. The most active participants of the eco–challenge – and the winners – turned out to be the teacher of art, the head of the beadwork circle and the craftswoman of upcycling products **Ayazgul Orokbaeva** (@aika_sabr07) and 9 participants of the **AUCA Muslim community** (@muslim_community_auca). Thank you all for your participation, creative approach and congratulations on your victory!

The Center for Civic Engagement and 3 students of the LAS department - **Firdavs Karimov**, **Kamila Zhunushova** and **Bayysh Stanbekov** (concentration "Social Entrepreneurship and Design Thinking") with the participation of **Green Club AUCA** actively worked on this eco-challenge. It was a creative experiment on the topic of environmental conservation and sustainable development within the framework of the course "Leading Change for Sustainability." Thanks to the active support of the LAS concentration coordinator, professor **Bermet Suiutbekova** and participation of the whole AUCA community – students, faculty and staff – this experiment was a success.

Green AUCA & TCMA department collaboration: 7 social videos about waste

As a result of the creative experiment of Green AUCA & TCMA department for 2 months (April-May), 7 social videos were created on the topic of waste management in AUCA and in everyday life.

About 30 TCMA students worked on the videos under the guidance of professors **Adilet Karzhoev** and **Zhumanazar Koichubekov** from the Television, Cinema & Media Arts department. The videos were shot in different genres, such as realism, surrealism, science fiction, black humor, etc. The presentation of the videos took place at AUCA on May 25, where student teams shared their experiences working on the project.

According to Adilet Karzhoev, the experiment turned out to be successful, and for students it was a very good experience and an opportunity to get out of their comfort zone while working on a real task. The videos are planned to be posted on the AUCA website and in social networks this June; in Fall, they will be presented to a wider public with the participation of other universities, schools, partners and the media.

We hope for further fruitful cooperation with TCMA department!

The project was **funded by the US Embassy in Bishkek within the framework of the project "Network of Climatologists of Kyrgyzstan,"** implemented by the American University in Central Asia and Bard College.

Green AUCA & LAS department collaboration: 3 projects with students

As a result of another creative experiment by Green AUCA & LAS department, several joint projects were born in Spring 2023.

Within the framework of the course "Leading Change for Sustainability" and with the active support of the LAS concentration coordinator, professor **Bermet Suiutbekova**, 9 LAS students were divided into 3 teams. Each team worked on its own mini-project: conducting an eco-challenge (**Firdavs Karimov's team**), investigating the behavior of the AUCA community in relation to waste management (**Kanyshai Jeenbekova's team**) and helping to sort waste on campus and hand it over for recycling (**Rukniddin Abdurakhmonov's team**).

The study on AUCA's behavior towards waste management will be further developed this Summer 2023 and conducted in Fall 2023. We will definitely share the results with our AUCA community.

Special thanks for such excellent work and assistance to the sorting team - **Rukniddin Abdurakhmonov**, **Sheroz Rashidbekov** and **Orif Nasrulloev**! These students helped to collect and recycle 40 kg of waste paper and 66 kg of plastic, earning some money on this. We hope to continue this project in Fall 2023!

Green AUCA results for 14 months (March 2022 – May 2023)

The Green AUCA program has been implemented since March 2022. During this time period, the following waste was collected and put into recycling at AUCA campus:

- 1600 kg of waste paper (i.e., 1500 kg of paper & 100 kg of cardboard)
- 544 kg of plastic
- 26 kg of batteries

In total, **over 23,000 soms** were raised during this time. This money was used to organize events within the framework of the program, to purchase stationery and for charity purposes (i.e., for the

Bishkek home for the elderly).

AUCA Sustainability Week

During WorldWide Teach-In, AUCA initiated a **Sustainability Week** during the last week of March, which consisted of a series of workshops with guest speakers, Make Climate a Class, and sustainability events, including showing videos about climate change from the OSUN network in the forum during the lunch hour every day.

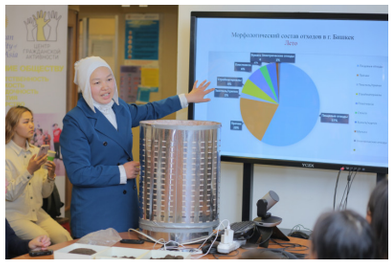
The 1st workshop **"Regenerative Practices: Ecovillage Design and Permaculture for Climate Solve Efforts"** was held on March 25. It was developed by Associate Professor **Olga Tarabashkina** (co-chair of AUCA Sustainability Task Force).

The workshop introduced participants to the basics of careful and scientific land management and work with the resources of Kyrgyzstan.

The 2nd event for AUCA students was a "**Climate Fresk"** workshop on March 28. More than 30 people took part in the engaging and collaborative learning with Climate Fresk, which is an innovative and internationally recognized tool for climate education – an immersive game in which one can get a complete picture of the phenomenon of climate change and comprehend the intimidating but simple science behind it. The participants found the workshop a thought-provoking and transformative learning experience. They recognized that there is a great need for wider awareness and more systematic integration of education for climate change in universities and schools.

The 3rd workshop **"Sustainable Environment"** was organized by the faculty of Environmental Sustainability and Climate Science department on March 30. The seminar program was very rich, experts in various fields spoke on different topics - environmental protection, waste reduction, development of "green" energy, water management and some others. Master classes and workshops were also held. In addition to AUCA professors and students, the seminar was attended by students from other educational institutions, such as Kyrgyz National Agrarian University named after K.I.Scriabin and TSI college. The seminar participants were greeted by AUCA President Jonathan Becker. In his speech, he noted that the event was organized for the purpose of networking and social activity to draw attention to climate issues.

The 4th "**Recycling"** workshop was organized on March 31 by the Center for Civic Engagement and devoted to the World Recycling Day. The event consisted of interactive games (i.e., Kahoot!) and guest lectures by invited speakers, such as **Ainura Sagyn**, co-founder of the Tazar waste project and developer of the mobile application of the same name, and **Nurzat Zhumamudunova**, a teacher of chemistry and biology at secondary school #71, the author of the ECOvolunteer composting project.



Finally, special sessions were held for AUCA faculty members to support and help them conduct **Make Climate a Class** in different disciplines. In total, 52 AUCA faculty signed up to Make Climate a Class which includes up to 500 students. For example, **Mairambek Nurgaziev**, professor from Environmental Sustainability and Climate Science department, conducted a climate change class in his "Food Security, Nutrition and Sustainable Development" course for his students, where the climate change concept with its local and global solutions in the context of food security was discussed. Another example is professor **Venera Urbaeva** from International and Business Law department who covered climate change and children's rights topics within the discussion of the readings for her course "Protection of Children's Rights."

"Eco Park" Project: Tree Planting

В Карагачевой роще посадили 700 саженцев

youtu.be

On April 29, 2023, AUCA and TSI students participated in the massive tree planting activity in the Elm Grove within the framework of the "Eco Park" project. **Around 700 plants were planted that day.** The event was organized by the Center for Civic Engagement in cooperation with the French-Kyrgyz Ecotourism Association (AFKE) and the Technical School of Innovation. It was attended by AUCA Vice President, General Director of the TSI college **Chyngyz Shamshiev** and President of the French-Kyrgyz Ecotourism Association (AFKE), Assistant Professor at the Environmental Sustainability and Climate Science department **Philippe Boizeau**.

About: In 2018, the Bishkek City Hall, the American University of Central Asia and the Franco-Kyrgyz Ecotourism Association signed an agreement on the joint implementation of the "Eco Park" project to restore the ecosystem of the grove. To date, more than 10,000 trees have been protected, more than 3000 trees, shrubs and some local endangered tree species planted and 310 tons of waste collected.

S. Kydyraliev's Book Presentation

Syrgak Kaparovich Kydyraliev, Professor of AUCA department of Applied Mathematics and Informatics, presented his **new children's book for young mathematicians** based on the fairy tale "Turnip." The book is part of his "Living Mathematics" series. The event was organized on May 17, 2023, by CCE and AUCA Library.

The presentation was attended by 50 people – library staff and primary school teachers from the Chui region (i.e., Kant, Tokmok, Sokuluk, Novopokrovka, etc.), as well as teachers and lecturers from Bishkek schools and universities (e.g., AUCA, BSU, gymnasium #26, AUCA TSI, etc.). All participants of the event received a book as a gift, and another 50 copies were donated to the libraries of the Chui region.

** Note: Everyone can also purchase the book "Turnip" for 150 soms in the CCE office (room 236), the proceeds from the sale will go to charity.*

The book "Turnip" (the series "Living Mathematics in Fairy Tales") for teachers and primary school children was published in 800 copies with the financial support of the AUCA Center for Civic Engagement.

"Students as Partners 2023" Conference

On March 30-April 1, 2023, the Open Society University Network's delegation participated in the **"Equipping Student Leaders As Partners for Sustainable Humanitarian Action" conference** organized by the International Students Overcoming War (ISOW) initiative at the Wilfrid Laurier University and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The OSUN delegation was represented by three universities in the network: **Bard College** (USA), **Central-European University** (Hungary) and **American University of Central Asia** (Kyrgyzstan).

The conference took place in Waterloo, Canada, and welcomed delegates and keynote speakers from different educational institutions, non-profit and non-governmental organizations from all over the world who are working in the sector of humanitarian action and promoting its importance both on local and international levels. In the times of growing humanitarian crises and global displacements, **the conference's mission was to bring together students, faculty, staff and NGO representatives to have fruitful discussions on how higher education institutions can support and equip students to initiate and lead sustainable initiatives for social change.**

Taking Responsibility: Student Organizers Lead on Humanitarian Aid

Recently a group of OSUN students traveled to Waterloo, Canada to participate in the Equipping Student Leaders As Partners for Sustainable Humanitarian Action conference...

opensocietyuniversity...

CCE Awards 2023

This year, CCE Awards ceremony is taking place within the Senior Farewell Award event organized by the Student's Life Office on June 2, 2023 at AUCA Forum.

The Center for Civic Engagement will award its active students in different categories, such as "Best Civic Engagement Project," "Best Sustainable Project," "Best Eco Project & Practices," etc.

About: CCE Awards is an annual ceremony that acknowledges students' civic activism and leadership. The ceremony invites the entire AUCA community, including student activists, and integral stakeholders in order to raise awareness about the important work our students are doing to address the social, educational, environmental and many other issues in their respective communities.

Open Society University Network: Opportunities

Community Engagement & Experiential Learning Grants

The OSUN Community Engagement & Experiential Learning Grants support the development of courses (up to $1500 USD per course) that connect student's classroom experiences with the community to enhance learning and promote active citizenship. In total, up to 5 courses can be supported by this grant.

To learn more and apply: https://forms.gle/AALcRzx6aMih8XWa6

Deadline: June 9, 2023 / 11:59 PM (midnight)

Important Deadlines for Summer 2023

9 June: OSUN Community Engagement & Experiential Learning Grant

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