



ACES Cultural Quarterly

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 2

Winter 2023

American Cultural Exchange Service

International Education Week Winners!

ACES is extremely proud of the way students represented their home countries in November during International Education Week! We received 57 excellent submissions from 42 countries for the 2022 contest. After careful consideration, we are excited to announce:

First Place! — Rida from Pakistan!

Rida excelled during IEW. She gave 12 presentations to around 250 people at her school! Rida shared some facts about her country's history, culture, and cuisine and taught her listeners greetings in her native language.



Second Place! — Enkhzul from Mongolia!

Enkhzul did a great job presenting her country to her peers. She shared fun facts about Mongolia and taught audiences about topics such as the Mongolian alphabet, currency, food, and some beautiful places in her country.

Thank you both for your dedication to promoting international education and congratulations on your well-deserved awards!

In This Issue:

Pgs. 1,2 IEW Winners

Pgs. 3,4 Highlights

Pg. 5,6 Sequoia National Forest

Pg. 7 South Dakota

Pg. 8-9 Celebrating the Holidays

Pg. 10 Important Reminders

Pg. 11 Global Youth Service Day

Pg. 12 BUBW Selection

Pg. 13,14 ACES Star Students

International Education Week Winners!

ACES would like to recognize all students who submitted entries. Your willingness to be an ambassador for your country is admirable, and we appreciate you for going above and beyond to share your culture.

Our sincerest gratitude to these exceptional students:

Anna Manuk Rafayelyan
Syuzi Ghulinyan
Gulshan Akhmedova
Marek Drinovsky
Oskar Lehtonen
Ave Alamets
Hanna Baranya
Aidar Kenzhebek
Zhaniya Zhunussova
Akylai Almazovna Amankulova
Markuss Tomass Saule
Kamila Musayeva
Maria Baburina
Enkhzul Gansukh
Alexandra Enache
Henrieta Kiskova
Hadiyatullo Odilov
Parvina Eshonqulova
Danylo Lazariev
Yuliia Hurnitska
Kamolakhon Aliboeva
Bosithkhon Vaisov
MM Nafis Bin Nazrul
Emir Okanovic
Zainab Zuhair
Mazen (Mohamed) Abdelghany
Rokaya Hosni

Riyad Murad
Rasheed Akparibo
Vania Kurnia
Erika Siluh Made Pramesthi
Dea Seran Suki
Mutiara Zahra
Lantar Daiva
Nameethaa Baskar
Hansika N M
Hala Hreish
Yusra (Dick
Abdulmohsen A-Isayegh
Mobasher Shalabi
Arwa El Souweid
Kawtar Azize
Maryame Arrach
Fatoumata Diakite
Neusa Paulo Inacio
Sidra Shakir
Rida Waheed
Hamdan Lucman
Kathyia (Kat) Kasungu
Khoudia Diop
Samuel Abu
Fatuma Hababuu
Annisa Hayeedama
Sude Kanan
Ege Konca



Left:

IEW Students
pose with
their home
country flags.

Highlights

This Winter 2023 *ACES* welcomed **11 new students** from Austria, Colombia, Germany, Italy, Mongolia, Malaysia, and Russia!



Above: Niko (Croatia) posing with a football for his Senior Photo.

Below: Abdulmohsen (Kuwait) learns about ecology at the bird conservatory.



Below: Hamdan (Philippines) enjoys the hammock at the Toledo Glass Museum.



Above: Nameethaa (India) and her Host Dad.



Above: Akylai (Kyrgyzstan) attends a rodeo at the Reno-Sparks Livestock Events Center.



Above: Marina (Spain) is ready to play some soccer.

Highlights



Above: Maryame (Morocco) gives a presentation about her home country at the International Dinner.



Above: Samuel (Sierra Leone) dancing outside the Toledo Museum.

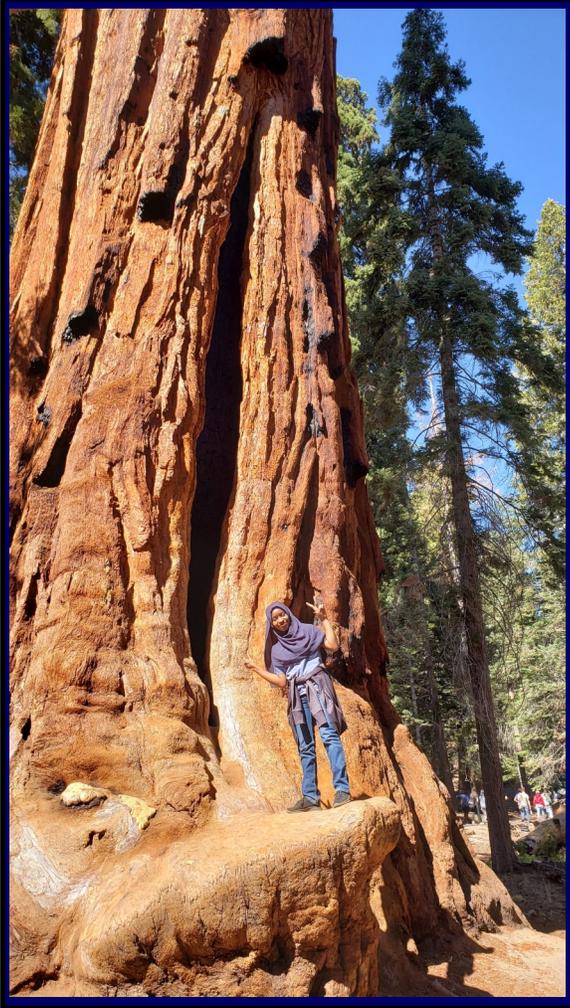


Above: ACES students in Ohio visit the Toledo Hungarian Club.



Above: Anna (Armenia) volunteering at the Festival of Trees.

Experiencing Sequoia National Forest



Above: Fatuma (Tanzania) poses next to a Giant Sequoia tree.

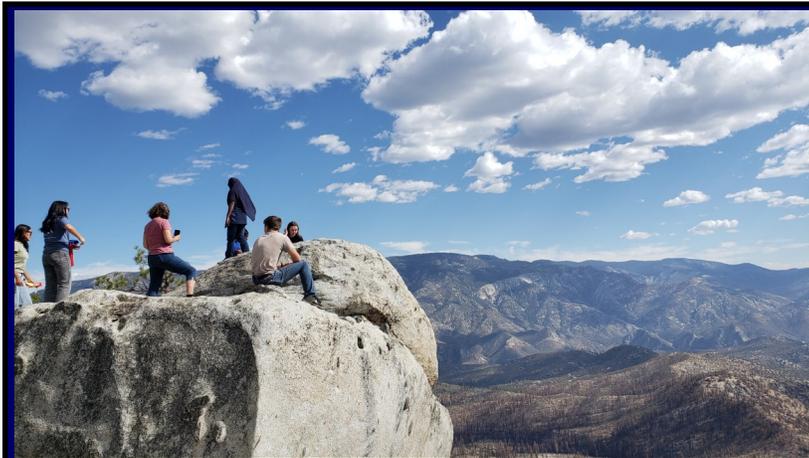
Below: ACES students in California at the summit of Dome Rock.



Above: Students and Local Coordinators climb fallen tree.



Above: Enkhzul (Mongolia), Sara (Poland), Akylai (Kyrgyzstan), Beshuu-Ujin (Mongolia), Fatuma (Tanzania), Fatoumata (Mali), Ege (Turkey) pose with their Local Coordinators by a giant tree.



Experiencing Sequoia National Forest



Above (in no order): Enkhzul (Mongolia), Sara (Poland), Akylai (Kyrgyzstan), Beshuu-Ujin (Mongolia), Fatuma (Tanzania), Fatoumata (Mali), Ege (Turkey) pose at Dome Rock.

Below: Beshuu-Ujin and Enkhzul display the Mongolian flag.



Below: Fatoumata poses for a photo.



South Dakota



Above: Tomislav (Croatia), David (Spain), Hanna (Hungary), Zeynep (Turkey), and Marieke (Germany) visit The Dignity Sculpture and learn about Native American history.

Right: Sophia (Germany), David (Spain), Hanna (Hungary), Sophia (Germany), Tomislav (Croatia) and Zeynep (Turkey) for a picture with the rotunda ceiling at the South Dakota Capitol building.



Above: Zeynep (Turkey), Hanna (Hungary), Hanna's host sister, Tomislav (Croatia), Emma (Austria) and Marieke (Germany) enjoying their time on the ice.



Celebrating the Holidays!



Above: Kamila (Lithuania) and host sister wearing witch and scarecrow costumes.



Above: Yosr (Tunisia) dressed as a witch.



Above: Marina (Spain) and her host sisters enjoy some Halloween fun.



Above: Anna (Armenia) and Elena (Spain) standing next to Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer.

Left: Students and Local Coordinators pose next to a Christmas Tree while visiting the state capitol building in South Dakota.

Celebrating the Holidays!



Above: Clockwise: Fatuma, Beshuu-Ujin, Ege, Akylai, Enkhzul, Fatoumata and Christina enjoying dinner at a Christmas Party.



Above: Phyllis (LC) and Anna (Armenia) volunteer at a local Festival of Trees event.

Right:

Niko (Croatia) opens a gingerbread house kit.



Left: Sebastian (Germany), Beatrice (Italy), Elena (Spain) and Niko (Croatia) pose at a local Festival of Trees event.



Important Reminders

Important Insurance Reminders (When You See A Doctor)

***Please refer to the instructions you received in your welcome packet.**

Note that your ACES student ID and your insurance ID cards are not the same!

If you need to visit a doctor during your exchange year, please be sure to **tell your Local Coordinator** and then do the following:

- Show your insurance card at the doctor's office. If you do not know what your insurance card is, or you think you have lost it, please ask your Local Coordinator about it right away!
- Pay your co-pay at the doctor's office – do not wait until later to do this!
- Submit a claim form to the insurance company **no later than one month after your doctor's visit**. Your host family and Local Coordinator can help you with this.
- If you have already visited the doctor this year, please ask yourself the following questions:

Did I show my insurance card at the doctor's office?

Did I pay my co-pay?

Did I submit a claim form to the insurance company?

If you answered NO to any of these questions, or if you have received any medical bills, please tell your Local Coordinator or the ACES office right away! You can reach the ACES office at 1-800-661-2237.

Tax Information for Families

You are allowed by the IRS to take a tax deduction of \$50 per month (a full month counts as 15 days or more in any calendar month) that you have hosted your foreign exchange student. We suggest you discuss this with a tax advisor, as individual tax situations vary.

Booking Your Return Flight: **NOW** is the time (*Does not apply to YES/FLEX Students*)

- Departures need to be **convenient for your host family. Ask them what day is most convenient.**
- Students must depart their host communities **no later than 10 days** after the last day of classes.
- **Contact** the person who booked your flight to the U.S. to confirm your return arrangements.
- Bring a credit/debit card for bag fees or pay online ahead of time. Airports do not accept cash payments.
- **Inform your Local Coordinator** of your departure date and flight itinerary.

If you have questions about your departure, contact your Local Coordinator or ACES at 1-800-661-2237.

Limit communication with your natural family & home country to 1 hour every 2 weeks, so you can get the most out of the rest of the year!

Volunteering

ACES provides certificates to students who complete volunteer community service throughout the year. To receive your certificate, all you need to do is submit the ACES Volunteer Activity form with the details of your community service to the ACES National Office.

***FLEX & YES Students:** You are required to volunteer. Please refer to your Enhancement Activities Binder for requirements and the correct form to send to the ACES National Office.

To find volunteer opportunities check out

www.volunteermatch.org,

www.idealists.org, ysa.org,

or talk to your teachers, Local Coordinator, or local YMCA or Boys & Girls Club!

Remember, volunteering in your community is a great way to say 'thank you' and to help share your culture with others. You are a cultural ambassador; leave your community with a positive impression of your country!



Above: David giving a presentation about Spain at a Senior Care Center.

Do you know a family who'd like to host? New student profiles are arriving now! Give your Coordinator their phone number!

Global Youth Service Day: April 28–30, 2023

Visit www.ysa.org/resources/ for more ideas and inspiration!

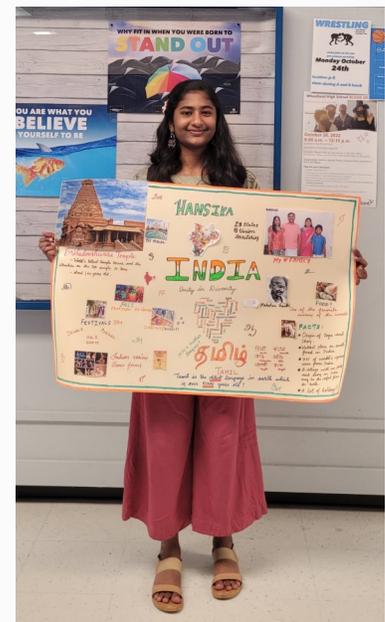


Above: Students in Ohio volunteer at the Walleye game by running the concession stand.

Global Youth Service Day, sponsored by Youth Service America, is the **largest** service event in the world. GYSD was designed to motivate the world's youth to work together with schools, volunteer organizations, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, government agencies, and individuals to address the world's pressing issues. This year GYSD is **Fri. April 28—Sun. April 30, 2023.**

Here are 9 quick and easy project ideas to plan a great GYSD service project:

1. **HOST A BAKE SALE** to help raise awareness and money for worthy causes like global hunger and curing childhood cancer.
2. **COLLECT FOOD** to donate to your local food bank.
3. **PLANT TREES** Contact your local Arbor Day Foundation office or environmental organization for low-cost or free tree programs.
4. **PICK UP TRASH** to clean and beautify your neighborhood. Organize a "trash mob" (flash mob to pick up trash) with friends.
5. **REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE** See how the recycling programs of your school, local restaurants, and coffee shops can be improved to reduce waste.
6. **COLLECT CLOTHING AND BLANKETS** to donate to organizations in your community who support people in need.
7. **MAKE DECORATED CARDS OR WRITE LETTERS** for children in a local hospital, senior citizens in local nursing homes, or those serving abroad in the military.
8. **COLLECT AND DONATE** DVDs, stuffed animals and children's books to local hospitals, shelters, and emergency responders.
9. **SERVE A MEAL TO A HUNGRY FAMILY** Contact community centers, & soup kitchens serving hot meals to those in need to volunteer there.



Hansika (India) during IEW posing with a project board she used during her presentations.

FLEX & YES students are required to participate in GYSD.

****Want to see yourself or your work featured in the next newsletter? Send submissions to Jarrod@ExploreTheWorld.org for the Spring Newsletter****

American Cultural Exchange Service

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Phone: 1-800-661-2237
Fax: 425-453-2239

E-mail: info@ExploreTheWorld.org
Website: www.ExploreTheWorld.org

ACES BUBW Selection

ACES has selected the following students to participate in the Better Understanding for a Better World conference. The conference is organized by the Civilizations Exchange and Cooperation Foundation and is focused on helping youth transcend the boundaries of fear through collaborative interaction and multi-cultural dialogue with a diverse student group. Congratulations to:



Anna Manuk Rafayelyan (Armenia)



MM Nafis Bin Nazrul (Bangladesh)



Rokaya Hosni (Egypt)

Hansika N M (India)



Henrieta Kiskova (Slovakia)

Kamolakhon Aliboeva (Uzbekistan)





ACES Star Students



Marcos

Marcos is from Spain and loves to share his culture and traditions with others. His willingness and enthusiasm for participating in school and home life is appreciated by his community and host family. He is part of the VEX Robotics team and has made many friends at school. Marcos is also a committed athlete who led his Varsity Soccer team to a City Cup Championship!

Khoudia

Khoudia comes from Senegal and is excelling in her Math and Science classes. She has been invited to join Mu Alpha Theta Math Honorary Club and is participating in her school's drama club. She is described as an outstanding leader of exceptional character and is a beloved member of her host family and community.



Matteo

Matteo is from Mexico and is a great scholar and athlete. His sportsmanship and dedication are greatly admired, as is his willingness to help out around the house. Matteo has demonstrated great leadership by organizing extra practices for his soccer team to run plays to use for an upcoming match. This extra effort paid off and the team was able to use those plays to win the game. Way to go Matteo!

Do you know a family who would like to host?

Give your Local Coordinator their phone number!

New student profiles are arriving now!



ACES Star Students

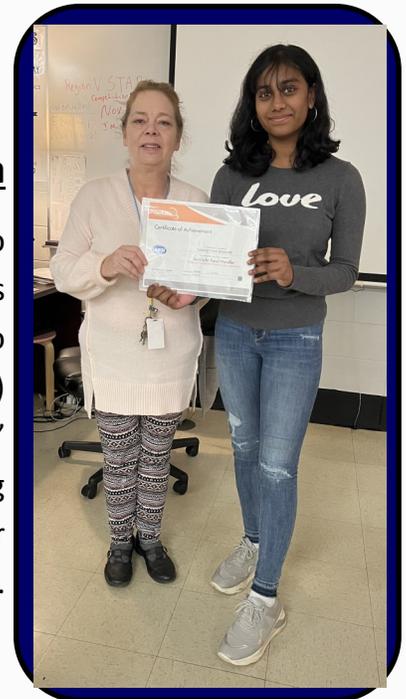


Gulshan

Gulshan, from Azerbaijan, has worked hard and made great strides in improving her English skills. Her host family, teacher, tutor, and coordinator all describe her as a hard worker who is very sweet and compassionate to everyone. Gulshan helps her host mom around the home without being asked and participates in every opportunity that comes her way. She has performed nearly 40 hours of community service and is described as a “super optimist” who always finds the positive in any challenge. Keep up the hard work Gulshan!

Nameethaa

Nameethaa, from India, goes above and beyond in her efforts to engage with her community. She talks with everyone and participates in every club, organization, and volunteering opportunity available to her. She is an exemplary scholar and is taking Advanced Placement (AP) classes at her school. She also earned a “Certificate of Achievement” for food safety and nutrition. Nameethaa is described as an amazing and highly motivated exchange student who is making the most of her time here in the US.



*** Nominations are accepted on a rolling basis and can be submitted by anyone! If you would like to submit a nomination use the QR code below or send the name, home country, photo and a short description of your reasons for nominating to*

Jarrood@ExploreTheWorld.org **