

# International Exchange Alumni Newsletter

## Issue 8, Winter 2016

### U.S. Embassy, Ankara – Public Affairs

Welcome to the International Exchange Alumni Newsletter of the US Embassy, Ankara where you hear the success stories of your fellow alumni, information about Embassy programs and events, and training and job opportunities offered exclusively to our alumni. Have an idea for an alumni project or event? Have a success story or useful tip you want to share? Write to the Alumni Coordination Office at [usaturkeyalumni@state.gov](mailto:usaturkeyalumni@state.gov)



#### **YES Alumni Volunteers Help Ambassador John Bass Host the U.S. Election Night Event**

U.S. Ambassador to Turkey John Bass hosted an U.S. Elections viewing party with Turkish academics, university students, and other invited guests at his residence November 8, 2016. Over thirty YES (Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study) program alumni volunteered as hosts and carried out fun election themed activities throughout the night.

The YES (Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study) program is a fully-funded exchange program for high school students aged 15-17, supported by the U.S. Department of State. Those who are selected from Turkey each year stay with volunteer families of the United States and continue their studies.

\* \* \*



#### **Turkish Alumni at TAA's Thanksgiving Dinner**

U.S. Embassy Cultural Attaché Angela Williams celebrated Thanksgiving with the U.S exchange alumni, the Turkish American Association staff, and guests at the Turkish American Association (TAA) in Ankara November 24, 2016. Angela shared the significance of the Thanksgiving in the United States, her memories of celebrating the holiday with her family, and her impression of Turks, Turkish culture, and the Turkish people.



### **Alumni Project: Change for Climate (C4C)**

Ramazan Oğuz Tosun, a SUSI Alumnus, along with three other alumni organized a training program on climate change at the METU Visnelik Alumni Facilities September 24. Over 30 students from METU, Gazi, Ankara, and Uludag universities participated in the workshop.

During the workshop, the participants learned about climate change, its impact on our planet, potential future threats, and details of the Paris COP21 Summit agreement. Participants compared the impact of climate change studies from Turkey and the United States.

\* \* \*

### **Alumni Project: Give Me a Hand for Refugees**

Umut Berker Sevilmiş, a 2012 professional exchanges alumnus, and Project Coordinator of Nilufer District Governor's Office of Bursa, launched language, integration and vocational training courses to 60 Syrian refugees in November in order to help them integrate into social and economic life in Turkey. Umut's project team is the first Turkish alumni group to win the Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund competition.

### **Alumni Small Grants Program**

The deadline for the U.S. Embassy's *Alumni Small Grants Program* is January 3, 2017. This program supports innovative, small-scale projects developed and implemented by Turkish citizens who have studied in the U.S. or have a connection to the U.S. government or U.S. Embassy. The Embassy will announce the winners by February 6, 2017.



### **Dr. Canan Dağdeviren Receives Science & SciLife Lab Prize**

Dr. Canan Dağdeviren, MIT and Harvard faculty member and Fulbright Alumna, wins SciLifeLab and Science Magazine's Prize for Young Scientists award. This prize highlights young scientists who have made a lasting contribution to their respective fields.

Dr. Dağdeviren was selected as the Translational Medicine Category winner with her essay, "The Future of Bionic Dynamos - Internal Organs have the Potential to Power Implantable Devices."

**NOTE:** We would like to highlight the accomplishments of our alumni, help them to engage with the larger community, and organize collaborative programs. Please share your success story with us at [usturkeyalumni@state.gov](mailto:usturkeyalumni@state.gov) or 0312 457 7204.

### **Dr. Canan Dağdeviren Shares her Scientific**

#### **Journey in Konya, Kocaeli, and Istanbul**

The U.S. Embassy invited Dr. Canan Dağdeviren to Konya, Kocaeli, and Istanbul to meet students, teachers, and academicians. The purpose of her program was to highlight the importance of women in science and encourage young girls to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and medicine. Dr. Dağdeviren engaged with students through a series of programs at Meram Science High School and Meram Anatolian High School in Konya December 13, 2016. In Izmit she visited Kocaeli University and Kocaeli Science High School on December 14, 2016. In Istanbul, she visited SEV High School on December 15, 2016.

During each visit Dr. Dağdeviren shared her journey as a scientist, her Fulbright experience, showed a movie about her scientific experiments, expressed her thoughts on new medicine and engineering technologies and conducted Q&A sessions.



### **Across the Sea with Film Director and Fulbright Alumna Nisan Dağ**

Nisan Dağ screened her highly successful film "Across the Sea" with over 100 alumni in attendance at CerModern in Ankara. Following the film, Nisan discussed her Fulbright experience and shared her experience as a film director.



### **#SWTTurkey Photo Contest Winners**

Ambassador John Bass and Istanbul Consul General Jennifer Davis hosted the Summer Work & Travel (SWT) Turkey Photo Contest reception. Alumni shared their best photos taken during their SWT experiences in the United States. This year's contest winner is Ipek Dolu, with her winning entry displayed above. Please click on the link to see other finalist photos: <https://tr.usembassy.gov/swtturkey-photo-contest-winners/>



### **2016 Summer Work Travel (SWT) Program Alumni Reunion**

The Alumni Affairs Office and Ankara-based work and travel agencies hosted a December 2 social mixer at Moodshifters. SWT Alumni talked about their SWT experiences in the United States, especially highlighting the service sector industries, as well as their travel to America's beaches, cities, and national parks.

## Alumni share their exchange experiences through web stories and video clips



[Please click on the pic to watch the video]

Congratulations to Devin Sommer, winner of the 2016 Institute of International Education (IIE) and the New York Times in Education Generation Study Abroad Video Contest. Devin is a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant to Turkey and a Gilman International Scholarship Program alumnus.

In an effort to double the number of U.S. students who study abroad IIE, in partnership with The New York Times, collected short (1-3 minute) digital submissions from study abroad returnees that demonstrate how study abroad gave them an edge, the impact it had on their life and the world, and how The New York Times content helped them navigate, enhance or make sense of their experience. Devin's winning digital story was highlighted in The New York Times and across social media.

\* \* \*

## Newcomers at the U.S. Mission, Turkey

### Philip Kosnett, Deputy Chief of Mission



Philip Kosnett began his assignment as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey in July 2016. He comes to Ankara after serving as Director of the U.S. State Department's Office of Southern European Affairs, responsible for U.S. relations with Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus. Much of his career has been focused on international security cooperation and political reconciliation. He has served as Deputy Chief of Mission in Uzbekistan and in Iceland; and in political, political-military, and economic-commercial positions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo, The Netherlands, and Japan. He previously served in Ankara at the start of his diplomatic career, as a political and consular officer. Washington assignments include tours in the State Department's European, Counterterrorism, Political-Military, and Intelligence & Research bureaus and the 24-hour Operations Center.

\* \* \*

## Open Vacancies at U.S. Mission, Turkey

**Political Assistant (Syrian Affairs) – GAZIANTEP – Open until filled.**

Please check the following link for open vacancies at the Embassy:

<https://tr.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/work-with-us/jobs/>

## KEEP IN TOUCH

### [International Exchange Alumni](#)

International Exchange Alumni Website: a place where past and present U.S. government-sponsored exchange program participants find tools to advance their communities and our world. Benefits of joining: alumni directory, job center, grants, events, research tools. View all benefits: <https://alumni.state.gov/about-international-exchange-alumni/benefits-joining>

Register to become a member of International Exchange Alumni Website: <https://alumni.state.gov/>

### [ExchangesConnect Web Site](#)

ExchangesConnect is an international online community managed by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs that connects potential, current, and former exchange program participants so that they can discuss application processes, programs, and living abroad.

### **[Facebook](#)**

Get connected with international exchanges!

### **[Twitter](#)**

ExchangesConnect is the online community from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), U.S. Department of State.

### **[YouTube](#)**

With YouTube individuals are able to document their personal experiences with other cultures and share it with online viewers.

### **[Tumblr](#)**

International Exchange Alumni on Tumblr.