



**Columbus International
Program**



OPEN WORLD
LEADERSHIP CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 2, 2012

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GEORGIAN DELEGATES EXAMINE PREVENTIVE EDUCATION AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AT THE PEACE COLLABORATIVE

May 2, 2012 Columbus, Ohio – Six Georgian delegates participating in the Open World Program will spend April 27 through May 5, 2012 in the Columbus area examining child welfare in the United States, focusing specifically on: protecting children's rights; protecting children from abuse; and the rights of orphans and runaways. Georgia is a former Soviet satellite country that is located in Southwest Asia and borders the Black Sea (west), Russia (northeast), and Turkey (southwest). This delegation will focus on local agencies and organizations that pertain to youth advocacy, such as: foster homes, family support centers, special education centers, and juvenile detention centers. The Columbus International Program will host the delegation in partnership with the Council of International Programs, USA (CIPUSA) who administers various programs on behalf of Open World. Managed by the independent Open World Leadership Center under Congressional mandate, Open World is designed to enhance understanding and cooperation between the United States and Russia by developing a network of leaders who have gained significant, firsthand exposure to America's process of small business development and implementation of business legislation. The Open World Leadership Center has awarded this grant to The Council of International Programs USA, headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio to administer this and similar exchanges in 2012. The

Columbus International Program is an affiliate of CIPUSA which was founded nearly 50 years ago by Henry Ollendorf. Mr. Ollendorf was a refugee from Germany living in Cleveland Ohio who felt the atrocities of World War II should never be repeated. Since its founding, CIP USA has hosted thousands of international professionals and training programs.

On May 3, the delegation will visit the PEACE Collaborative of [HelpLine of Delaware and Morrow Counties](#) to meet with Collaborative Coordinator Ben Schenko. This session will focus on preventive education and positive youth development in Delaware County Schools. The goal of the PEACE Collaborative is to have local primary prevention agencies work together, with schools, to provide comprehensive, age-appropriate programming to best meet the needs of all youth and school curriculum standards.

During their time in Ohio, the delegates will also meet with officials from the Office of Congressman Steve Stivers, the Institute for Human Services, Franklin County Children Services, Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities West Central School, The Salvation Army, The Childhood League Center, Nationwide Children's Hospital Center for Child and Family Advocacy, the Delaware County Interagency Youth CLUSTER, the Ohio Department of Youth Services Training Academy/ Scioto Juvenile Corrections Facility, and the Public Children Services Association of Ohio.

Based on Open World Guidelines as well as the participants' backgrounds and goals, we have structured our program around these main themes: youth advocacy in the United States and the overall acceptance of the Rule of Law in our society; the roles of the American and State governments in protecting the rights of children around the country; the roles that different organizations play in serving the young citizens of the country; and the promotion of American and Georgian cultural awareness and understanding.

The visiting delegates are Salome Chichinadze, Chief Specialist in the Social Services Division of the Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs; David Lomidze, Deputy Minister with the Georgia Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs; Tea Simonia, Director of the Senaki Institution of Children with Disabilities; Thea Tkemaladze, Chief Social Agent of the Old Tbilisi Social Service Center; Lali Tsertsvadze, Director of the Orphanage House State Care Agency's Branch in Saguramo; and Natia Kaladze, Director of the University of Georgia, School of Social Sciences.

Delegates will be housed with local families in order to experience American family life. They will also take part in several cultural and community activities, visit popular locales in the area, and sample restaurants. These activities are designed to expose participants to the wide array of American culture and pastimes.

The U.S. Congress established Open World in 1999 and expanded the program in 2003 to all post-Soviet states. Thanks to Open World, some 14,000 current and future Eurasian leaders have experienced American civil society and have been exposed to new

ideas and practices that they can adapt for use in their own work. Open World also promotes partnerships and continued communications between delegates and their American hosts and professional counterparts. Open World currently operates exchanges for political and civic leaders from Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan.

For more information, please contact Mark Poeppelman, Executive Director of the Columbus International Program at 614-425-2268 or 221-0034 or Maura Shelden, Open World Public Affairs Officer at 202-707-6197. For more information on Open World, please visit <http://www.openworld.gov>.