

Moldovan Parliamentarians Visit North Carolina in May 2012

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http://www.americancouncils.md/open_world/news/518

One of the first memorable moments of our Open World visit in US was the Library of Congress tour. Thanks to Vera De Buchananne the parliamentarians got an insight on the American cultural treasure represented by the Library. The members of the delegation were very thankful to other representatives of the Library of Congress who offered insightful information about the Library of Congress programs and eventual cultural exchanges with Moldova in the future.

The parliamentarians acknowledged the contribution of the office of Secretary of the State Elaine Marshall to the successful and productive realization of the program in North Carolina. The contribution to the partnership of the Republic of Moldova and the State of North Carolina provided by Elaine Marshall and Mr. Rodney Maddox, Chief Deputy Secretary of State is tremendously valuable and their personal attitude to solving all the problems was heartfelt.

The visit consisted mostly of office meetings and discussions related to such topics as N.C. connections with Moldova, possibilities of partnership development among

state institutions and the community; democratic mechanisms of state institutions; communication with the general public, interuniversity collaboration between Moldova and North Carolina; Partnership for Peace initiative between Moldova and North Carolina; partnership between North Carolina's medical libraries; fundraising projects as well as medical investigation materials and training materials. One of the site visits took place at UNC-Chapel Hill where the results of a distance learning project between Moldova and NC were demonstrated. The amount of time available for work in NC was efficiently used to the limits. A separate discussion was dedicated to identification of means for improvement of provision of education literature for Moldovan universities, also during this visit there was acknowledged the fundraising efforts and collection of old books performed till present by American partners.

The event carried out in the frames of the program provided substantial contribution to the understanding of the American regulatory system, its peculiarities, including communication with general public, work with lobbyists, communication with mass media, transformation of bills into regulations etc. The biggest impact, therefore, was assured by the level of expertise of the representatives of the legal bodies, by the personality of the congressmen, senators and staff members and their involvement in the partnership between NC and Moldova, while further collaboration with them will provide for accumulation of added value to the purpose of Open Word Program activities.

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Alumni feedback

" Meeting American senators, congressmen and politicians was for me an opportunity to gain confidence in my daily work as a member of Moldovan parliament. The Open World visit made me truly understand the phrase "I am American" and look with different eyes at the "I am Moldovan" statement.

I was especially impressed with the legislative process, the mechanisms of parliamentarian control and the responsibility towards the voters. Attending a parliamentarian session in the House of Representatives was a demonstration of good practices of the American legislature, for example inviting witnesses to discuss bills and legal drafts. One aspect of the Open World visit which attracted

my attention was the American attitude towards time and work. Based on my observation regarding the balance between workload and time management, I intend to propose a modification in the Moldovan Labor Code.

The people I met as part of the Open World visit - Mr J. O Keefe, Mrs Elaine Marschall, Mr Rodney Maddox, senators from the House of Representatives, National Guard representatives from North Carolina, teaching staff at Chapel Hill University and our host families - inspired me to work on several post program projects, such as organizing a round table event to discuss the legislative blockage of book donations (we need to implement a legal modification regarding the publishing date of books which are donated - a subject we discussed with our colleagues from North Carolina) and another round table to discuss the adoption of Moldovan children issue. Upon my return from US I had a discussion with the Director of The Institute for Development of Information Society under the Academy of Science of Moldova in order to promote several partnership projects with North Carolina. Last, but not least, I started studying English!

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