



# ASSIST Newsletter

## February 2011

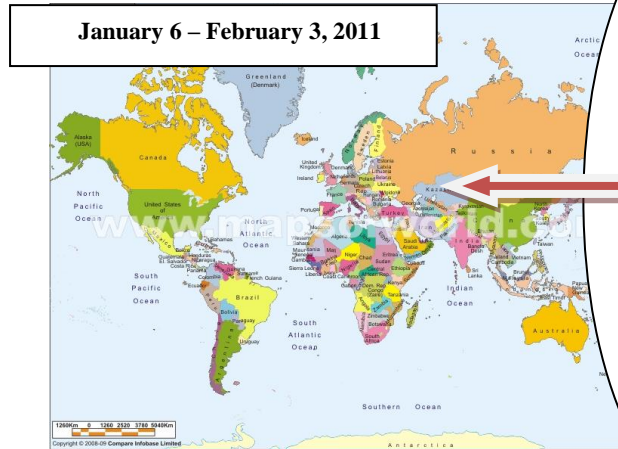
### ASSIST – Around the World in 30 Days!

ASSIST Staff and Directors traveled to 15 countries in less than a month's time.

- 13 - Receptions Held
- 418 - Students Interviewed
- 832 - Accumulated Air Travel Hours (Bob Stanley wins the frequent flyer award!)
- 10+ - Jet Lag Indicator

#### Worthy ASSIST World Travelers Who Deserve Our Thanks

- |             |                  |
|-------------|------------------|
| Bob Stanley | Kimberly Pope    |
| Jack Eidam  | Woody Rutter     |
| Dick Hall   | Sonia Maczeaková |
| Marty Milne | Dale Wentz       |



- Austria
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Germany
- Hungary
- Israel
- Jordan
- Lithuania
- Moldova
- Ramallah
- Slovakia
- Turkey
- South Africa
- Spain

### And the Class of 2011...What have our Scholars learned?

- *I learned how to learn in a new study environment where you can talk, interact, ask questions and offer a new opinion. I learned how to make new friends, how things work, how to fit in, be a student, a member of this community.* **Hoa Nguyen**, Vietnam, The Bush School (WA)
- *I learned the importance of a really great education, that working hard pays off, and that when life gives you lemons, you should make lemonade.* **Klara Vajnerová**, Czech Republic, Brentwood School (CA)
- *I know now that taking advantage of an opportunity can be life-changing in a good and growing way.* **Paulius Urbonas**, Lithuania, Christ School (NC)
- *I learned how to live life to the fullest, try new things, meet new people and not to think about home too much because my time here is limited and I want to enjoy every second.* **Lenka Knapová**, Czech Republic, Trinity Prep School (FL)
- *I learned how to snowboard! It feels like flying!* **Anna Buic**, Croatia, White Mountain School (NH)
- *I found out that the ASSIST experience was not just about understanding American culture, but also about appreciating my own country.* **Klara Sarkovska**, Czech Republic, Lancaster Country Day School (PA)

*I am having the greatest adventure of my life.*  
**Martin Wende**, Germany  
 St. Paul's School (NH)

### Only in America! First-Time Adventures & Accomplishments

- **Movie Stars Seen/Talked With:** Arnold Schwarzenegger, Tom Cruise • **Klara Vajnerová**, Czech Republic, Brentwood School (CA)
- **Unusual Vacation:** Worked on a pecan farm in New Mexico over Christmas • **Flóra Keresztély**, Hungary, Chatham Hall (VA)

- 📌 **Records Broken:** The school's 100-yard breaststroke record and two relay records • **Kirstin Jauch**, Germany, Fountain Valley School (CO)
- 📌 **Biggest Laugh:** While skiing, someone asked our ASSIST Scholar where he lived. His reply, "The Czech Republic." To which the inquirer asked: "And how far is Czech from Czechoslovakia?" • **Vojtech Curin**, Czech Republic, Colorado Rocky Mountain School (CO)
- 📌 **Outdoor Experience:** Tracked an injured deer at night and did quail hunting • **Sebastian Klima**, Czech Republic, Woodberry Forest School (VA)
- 📌 **Halloween:** Won 2<sup>nd</sup> place in a costume contest dressed up as NASA scientist • **Tereza Uhlirová**, Czech Republic, Mercersburg Academy (PA)
- 📌 **Big Moments:** Gave a presentation to 500 people • **Lenka Knapová**, Czech Republic, Trinity Prep School (FL)
- 📌 **All American Moment:** Went to the Texas State Fair • **Karim Melliti**, Germany, St. Mark's School of Texas (TX)

## *Global Citizens & Contributors Around the World*

### *Alumna Profile: Elena von Sperber '94, Germany, Wyoming Seminary (PA)*

If you ever want to be reassured that ASSIST does a good job of identifying outstanding Scholars who will go make a mark on our world, then you need to meet Elena von Sperber.

After her Wyoming Seminary year, she returned to Germany and earned her Abitur and went on to receive her undergraduate degree from the University of Passau, studying international relations, economics and languages (she speaks English, German, Spanish, Swedish and French). A serendipitous meeting with a Sem graduate and former Peace Corps volunteer in Chile prompted her to take courses in business and economics at the University Austral in Valdivia (south coast of Chile). During her time in Chile, she spent a term working with a penguin protection colony in Patagonia.



Prompted by this experience, Elena went on to earn her Master's degree in international environmental science and environmental politics at Lund University. While in Sweden, she worked as a communications officer at the Charles Darwin Research Station in the Galapagos and for the Blue Flag Program that certifies the safety and environmental condition of beaches around the world. Berlin was the next stepping stone in her educational path (Ecologic Institute). For the past two years, Elena has been a Fellow at the International Union for the Conservation of Nature in Washington, D.C.

Elena remains active with ASSIST. She is the alumni liaison to the Washington, DC, Chapter. This past summer, she participated as a group leader in the orientation of the Class of 2010/11 at the Pomfret School. As an ASSIST alumna, her perspective had enormous value to those just beginning their experience. What a role model Elena is to those who follow her!

### *Alumna Profile: Lana Šešelj '02, Croatia, Caitlin Gabel School (OR)*



Lana is spending this year teaching Biology at the Islamic High School in Zagreb, Croatia. The school was founded four years ago by the Islamic community, follows the public curriculum, and includes several additional religious and cultural courses including 'Islamic culture and civilization,' and Arabic as a mandatory foreign language. There is a mosque in the school complex and prayers are said at certain times of the day. Lana teaches biology to all four grades, including the theory of evolution and the origin of life, as they are part of the mandatory biology curriculum. She reports that she has "never heard anyone voicing critical or negative remarks about the course material."

Lana's students come not only from Croatia, but also from other countries, including Bosnia, Macedonia and Albania. Regardless of where they might come from, Lana reports that their interests differ little from other students. As a group they are "highly motivated, smart and hard-working." While there are the inevitable challenges faced by many in the teaching profession, Lana takes great pride in seeing her students grow and learn. We congratulate you, Lana, on the good and lasting work that you are doing.

***Alumna Profile: Henriette Lundgren '96, Germany, Lake Forest Academy (IL)***



Alumna Henriette Lundgren (from Germany originally) is not only a business trainer, who works with major companies across Europe, but also a passionate baker. Two years ago, she decided to make a bit more of her hobby and founded *Free Cakes for Kids UK*, a community service for families who find it difficult to provide a birthday cake for their child.

Free Cakes has over 20 volunteer bakers. When we last heard, the group had just decorated their 101<sup>st</sup> cake. Each cake is designed with a child's favorite theme in mind (example to the right). They work closely with a number of social projects in Oxford, including Community Emergency Foodbank, children centres, an organization working with asylum seekers, and the Young Careers project.



If you would like to learn more about Free Cakes for Kids, you can contact Henriette at [oxford@freecakesforkids.org.uk](mailto:oxford@freecakesforkids.org.uk) or visit their website at [www.freecakesforkids.org.uk](http://www.freecakesforkids.org.uk). You can also find them on Facebook and Twitter (@freecakes).

***Alumni Gatherings from Sweden to the tip of Africa***



***Reporting back after the Frankfurt reception:***

**Felix Faisst '05**, Germany, Wyoming Seminary (PA), studying business at University of St. Gallen, Switzerland

*ASSIST gatherings are a great opportunity to stay in contact with ASSIST friends and also to get to know other alumni from other years. As I talk with others with a variety of unique backgrounds and experiences, I am reminded of the tremendous value inherent in the ASSIST network. It is a wonderful time to share thoughts on issues, exchange experiences, and learn about internships. ASSIST gatherings are always enjoyable!*

***Lithuania***

In early January, more than 20 ASSIST alumni and U.S. embassy diplomats attended a reception at the home of the Kazickas Family in Vilnius. Once again, the Kazickas Family Foundation will be sponsoring three deserving Lithuanian Scholars. Kneeling: ASSIST Director Woody Rutter, President Bob Stanley, and Foundation Executive Director Zenonas Bedalis.



*Düsseldorf, Germany*



*Chisinau, Moldova*



*Barcelona, Spain*



*Stockholm, Sweden*

### *The 'Sem Mafia' Gathering*

Christmas is my favorite holiday, not only because I get a chance to spend some precious time with my relatives in Slovakia, but also because it is the time of the year when I get to catch up with my ASSIST family. This year was no different. On December 27, the Sem Mafia: **Anna Michalkova '03**, **Miriam Halamickova '04** (maiden name: Ferencikova), **Jan Michalko '05** and I met for our annual reunion. While drinking caramel lattes, we all recalled old memories from Wyoming Seminary and updated each other on the happenings in our lives.

During our conversation, I had a chance to find out that Anna, who has recently received her master's degree from Uppsala University in Sweden, is now working as a policy analyst trainee at a strategic think-tank in The Hague, the Netherlands. She is excited about all the opportunities and possibilities that the New Year will bring.

Miriam, who has been happily married for a year and a half, works for a non-profit youth organization and is in charge of various interesting projects, including the preparation of summer camps for children. She also works with children who have learning disabilities. Miriam would like to pursue a masters degree in musical therapy.

Jan is currently in his senior year at Susquehanna University in Pennsylvania, USA. Last year, he spent a semester in Tanzania and Germany. Over the past couple of months, Jan has been applying for master's programs in the UK, and next year he will be enrolled in a graduate program in the field of international development.

Even though our careers have taken us in different directions, it is good to know that one day in December will always be reserved for the our getting together!

*Notes from Sonia Maczeaková '02, Slovakia, Wyoming Seminary (PA)*



## So Many Ways to Show Your Appreciation

### Giving Back & Saying “Thank You, ASSIST”

**John Faylor** has been a friend to ASSIST for many years, serving as a valued colleague and legal counsel to ASSIST and for the Förderverein. He believes resolutely in the value of ASSIST and “cannot find a better forum for strengthening ties between two countries than the ASSIST program.” His words and story (to the right) should inspire others to voice their gratitude.

Enilö Berenceiné Csábi and László Berencei, Hungary, parents of **László '11**, Rabun-Gap Nacoochee School (GA), expressed their thanks to ASSIST and wrote that they wished that “ASSIST could feel the love of families like (theirs) who received the most valuable present from ASSIST: trust in (their) children.”

*ASSIST provides me an ideal forum to give back to Germany what Germany gave to me over the past 45 years. That's how long I have lived in this wonderful country. I was the first post-war American to be admitted to the German Bar. The Germans opened doors for me during my law studies at Heidelberg in the early 1970's and during my mandatory legal internship following my degree. They went to great lengths to change the laws and the bar admissions rules to make my practice of German law possible. It took me several years to realize that the professors and governmental officials who helped me were themselves beneficiaries of American openness and generosity in the early years after the war. Many of them had studied at U.S. universities. They were returning that generosity by helping me to achieve my goal. You cannot find a better forum for strengthening the ties between two countries than the ASSIST program.*

John A. Faylor, Partner  
Rechtsanwalt/Attorney at Law  
Mayer Brown LLP

**Annual Fund** - Our thanks to the 109 contributors who, as of January 1, had made gifts to the ASSIST Annual Fund. We are making progress toward our goal of \$160,000, but we need to call upon those who value ASSIST to invest in our ability to serve our Scholars, alumni, member schools, and the extended ASSIST family. We depend on our supporters to help bridge the gap of over 30% between our operating budget and expenses. Every little bit and larger bites help! The Annual Giving Deadline for 2010/11 is June 30<sup>th</sup>.



To learn more about giving opportunities and the Annual Fund - [www.assist-inc.org](http://www.assist-inc.org),  
(select “support” from the main menu bar)

### Other Giving Opportunities

- Student Sponsorships
- **Corporate Matching Programs \***
- Matching Grants
- Planned Giving
- Special Projects (Orientation, Host Family Program, Alumni Receptions, Video, 45<sup>th</sup> Celebration, etc.)
- Your Choice!

\* *Many companies match the gift of an employee to a nonprofit organization. Double your gift to ASSIST ([www.assist-inc.org](http://www.assist-inc.org), select “support” from the menu bar)*

[Click for Link to the Brochure Below](#)



Gifts that Keep on Giving



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Vice President for Advancement  
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E-Mail: [meg@assist-inc.org](mailto:meg@assist-inc.org)  
[www.assist-inc.org](http://www.assist-inc.org)  
September 2010

## Announcements



**An ASSIST Scholar in the Making.** We think so! We are delighted to announce the arrival of Ben Frederik Müller-Wegner, son of Isa Müller-Wegner, St. Paul's School '94, and Andre, and grandson of **Rosemarie Wegner**, ASSIST Country Coordinator in Germany. Ben joined the Müller-Wegner family on January 20th at 3.94kg and 53cm, in the middle of a snowstorm. He has already expressed an interest in ASSIST (smart fellow).

**ASSIST Staff Opening:** Director of Alumni Relations. We welcome inquires. A full job description is located on the ASSIST website ([www.assist-inc.org](http://www.assist-inc.org)).

**Engagement:** Dora Pordan '04, Hungary, Wyoming Seminary (PA) and her boyfriend, Csaba, have just announced their engagement. They currently are both studying in Tokyo.

**ASSIST Speaking at National Conference, February 24th:** *'The Give and Get of Global: How to Make Everyone a Winner'* - Two senior professionals from schools with years of experience in creating a global community will interact with two of their students (one international, one national). With ASSIST, they will discuss practical logistics, orientation, home stays, bringing cultures, host family dynamics, long-term personnel, and school benefits. Audience participation is a critical ingredient and valued. Presenters: Meg Moulton, ASSIST (MA); Blake Spraggins, Maret School (DC); Hart Roper, St. Albans School (DC); ASSIST Scholars.



## Mark your Calendar

2011 February 24-25	National Assoc. of Independent Schools (NAIS) Annual Conference, Washington D.C.
April 10	DC Chapter Spring Gathering, 1:30 – 3:30, Holton-Arms School
To be announced	Alumni Receptions: Amherst, MA; Cambridge, MA; New Haven, CT; New York, NY
April 30 – May 1	ASSIST Board of Directors spring meeting, Suffield, CT

**NOTE:** Alumni and friends of ASSIST are welcome to events and gatherings, wherever they might be. Please contact [meg@assist-inc.org](mailto:meg@assist-inc.org) if you find yourself in the area!



## Class Notes



We welcome your news. Please send e-mails to us at [ASSIST@assist-inc.org](mailto:ASSIST@assist-inc.org) (Subject Line: Class Notes). Notes received since our last quarterly publication appear below. To navigate to the full history of Class Notes, go to the ASSIST website ([www.assist-inc.org](http://www.assist-inc.org)), select Alumni, Class Notes, and then Year on the ASSIST website.

We're delighted to have Ken & Betsy Lindfors as our Class Notes editors. From 1987 to 2000, Ken was President of ASSIST and Betsy was Vice President. They both continue to be an essential part of the leadership of ASSIST.

*Class Notes continue on the next page.*



## *Class Notes*

### *CLASS OF 2010/11*

**Eve Barclay**, Hockaday School  
**Natalia Guaza Lasheras**, Princeton Day School  
**Kirstin Jauch**, Fountain Valley School  
**Flora Keresztély**, Chatham Hall  
**Lenka Knapová**, Trinity Preparatory School  
**Karim Melliti**, St. Mark's School of Texas  
**Hoa Nguyen**, The Bush School  
**Klara Sarkovska**, Lancaster Country Day School  
**Denisa Skantarová**, Porter-Gaud School  
**Shaoran Sun**, The Haverford School  
**Tereza Uhlilová**, Mercersburg Academy  
**Paulius Urbonas**, Christ School  
**Klara Vajnerova**, Brentwood School  
**Martin Wende**, St. Paul's School

### *CLASS OF 2009/10*

**Diana Boa**, Maret School

### *CLASS OF 2008/09*

**Laia Garrido**, Bosque School

### *CLASS OF 2007/08*

**Christoph Tries**, North Shore Country Day School

### *CLASS of 2004/05*

**Justas Balciunas**, Sewickley Academy

**Marta Pisarczyk**, St. Paul's School

### *CLASS OF 2003/04*

**Dora Pordan**, Wyoming Seminary

### *CLASS OF 1998/1999*

**Justas Staisiunas**, Loomis Chaffee School