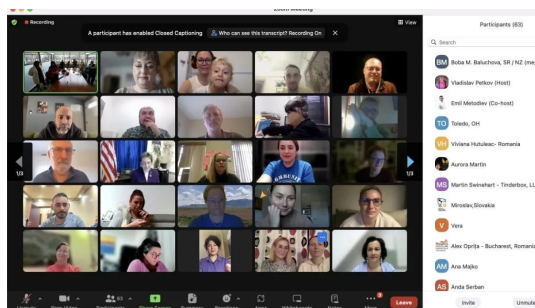




STAY INFORMED: News Bites

Emotional retirement party for Elizabeth Balint

Nearly 90 people got together for a virtual retirement party of the GLC Professional Fellows Program Manager Elizabeth Balint on December 11th. After designing the program more than 12 years ago and managing it with unseen dedication, Elizabeth is now retiring. Special guests of the event were Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur and State Department Officer Linnea Alison, which both shared words of appreciation to Elizabeth. She was also greeted by various generations of alumni of the program from all five European countries in the program and the US. Slovak alumna Edita Bednarova, who also serves as the internal evaluator of the program, quizzed Elizabeth on some important numbers, while Hungarian alumni Boglarka Dombi and Mira Lajos presented a memory book, which was co-created by tens of alumni members. A photo compilation, prepared by US mentor Hannah Willage, took us back all the way to 2012 when the first European delegation landed in the US. We closed the event with music and dance, thanks to Romanian alumna Viviana Hutuleac.



Thanks to Peter Ujvagi, Elizabeth experienced this emotional event in the physical presence of colleagues and friends, including GLCAP staff Deb Martin and Brianna Dennis (who is now taking charge of the program), along with the family of Dave Beckwith.

If you missed it, recording of the event is kept in our video library and available upon request. But there is one more thing you can do that will make Elizabeth happy and that is a [donation](#) to the Dave Beckwith Memorial Strategic Partnerships Program.

And once again: Congratulations on your deserved retirement, Elizabeth, and thank you for everything!

Thank you note from Elizabeth

Thanks so much for throwing me such a memorable retirement party! It was a great event, and I am



surprised it was all for me. You made me feel important and appreciated. I love my gift from all of you: the Memory Book, and thanks to everyone who shared beautiful messages and to Bogi and Mira for pulling it together and organizing it. I'll think of you often whenever I hold it in my hand to read it and show to others!

I was thrilled to celebrate my retirement with about 100 of you virtually and/or in-person in Toledo and humbled that you planned such a sensational party in my honor. I would like to express my thanks and deep appreciation for the kindness of everyone who attended, and shared

heartwarming messages and especially those who made every detail of the event so perfect. I will treasure your kindness always and will hold on to the video recording to watch it multiple times.

I would like to also thank to All of you who sent me nice postcard and other notes by mail and/or by mail or Messenger! It was a big surprise as so many came at the same time, and this made me very happy! Thanks a lot for taking the time and effort to organize this as well!

Let us not forget how much we all achieved together as a team in the US and in Europe and let us not forget to stay connected. You are woven into my very life, and I like the tapestry we have become. While my GLCAP email address will not work after January 1, 2024, I can be reached on Facebook, Messenger, Whatsapp and on some of my old hotmail addresses. I am so proud of our alumni community and the impact that each of you are making in your community and beyond! Thank you for helping me in the last 12 years to make a difference in people's lives, especially in marginalized and rural communities through using community organizing and civic engagement tools.

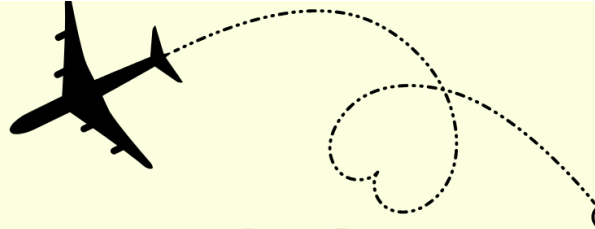
Wishing you All a great holiday season and a Happy and Successful 2024!

STAY SUPPORTIVE: Fundraising

Support the Dave Beckwith Memorial Strategic Partnerships Program

We are fundraising for the Dave Beckwith Memorial Strategic Partnerships program. This is an alumni-only program, which financially supports trips across the Atlantic to boost and enhance strategic partnerships between people and organizations. The program was named after our beloved program advisor and friend of the GLC/GLCAP program Dave Beckwith, whom we lost in

the spring of 2022. It is set to honor his memory and immense contribution to our community.



DAVE BECKWITH MEMORIAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM



Internal program within the GLC/GLCAP Professional Fellows Alumni Network providing support for overseas trips of alumni and mentors of the program to build and strengthen strategic partnerships between people and organizations from Europe and the U.S.

In 2023 we have supported 6 trips:

- Nevena Pashova (Bulgaria, Spring 2015) returned to Springfield, MA, to learn more about youth (electoral) organizing;
- Ellen Macaulay (US) travelled to Hungary to offer trainings and presentations on sustainability;
- Zsanett Fűgg (Hungary, Spring 2015) travelled to Toledo, OH, to enhance partnerships with the World Affairs Council of Northwest Ohio;
- Elizabeth Sammons (US) travelled to Bulgaria and Slovakia to work with disability groups and cultural venues to enhance accessibility, and to join the international alumni reunion in Albania;
- Annamaria Kovacs (Hungary, Fall 2013) travelled to Orlando, FL, to work with River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding (RPCP).
- Victor-Catalin Toma (Romania, Spring 2019) travelled to Boise, Idaho, to work with United Vision for Idaho and others on rural youth programs.



SUPPORTED TRIPS IN 2023:



Nevena Pashova (Bulgaria)
in Springfield, MA



Ellen Macaulay (US)
in Budapest, Hungary



Zsanett Fűg (Hungary)
in Toledo, OH



Elizabeth Sammons (US)
in Sofia, Bulgaria



Annamaria Kovacs
(Hungary) in Florida



Victor-Catalin Toma
(Romania) in Idaho

[DONATE HERE](#)

Gratitude to those who have already donated:

Peter Szabados
Monika Balint
Genoveva Horvath
Zita Szederkenyi

HUNGARY

ROMANIA

Luca Ciubotaru

ALBANIA

Ana Majko
Blerina Kureta



**THANK
YOU!**

THE U.S.

Cris Doby
Elizabeth Balint
Geoffrey Howes
Hannah Willage
Kristen Gerwin
Lindsay Potts
Sondra Youdelman
Tara Parrish

BULGARIA

Ashod Derandonyan
Diana Nedeva
Dilyana Gyurova
Nevena Pashova
Silvia Bakalova
Vladislav Petkov

SLOVAKIA

Robert Furiel
Edita Bednarova
Miroslav Ragac

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

This is the 29th issue of the GLChange-Makers Update and the last that I will put together. It was with excitement and some fear that I started serving as international alumni coordinator of the GLC Professional Fellows Program back in 2020. It was an uncharted territory and it came with the responsibility of building and maintaining relationships across countries and delegations. It is also why this position was so enriching for me, as it has allowed me to better explore the richness and diversity of our 450+ alumni community. I got to know so many of you, for which I am beyond grateful.

Yet, circumstances change and as I am starting a new job and a new life in Spain, I am as of now stepping down from the position of international alumni coordinator, and I am no longer a country director for Bulgaria. I will however remain active alumni member. So, let's stay connected.

With gratitude,

Vladi



GLC Alumni Network

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The GLC Alumni Network is administratively managed in Europe by our Bulgarian partner Pro European Network.



PROFESSIONAL
FELLOWS

