



# Ambassadors of Change

A Newsletter of the Technology Ambassadors Program



## News Briefs

### TAP 2005 Begins October 13

Recruitment for TAP 2005 will begin October 13, 2004 as Project Harmony begins accepting student recommendations from FLEX placement coordinators. Planning is underway for the new program year, with space secured in the new 21<sup>st</sup> Century Library and Learning Center at Middlebury College. Digital storytelling will once again be the focus of this year's workshop, which will occur from March 16 – 26, 2005.

### Preserving Belarusian Language and Culture

Volha Charnysh, Belarus, highlighted the importance of preserving Belarusian language and culture through a digital story presentation, self-designed brochures, and interactive games at two sessions for students and professionals in her home country. Additionally, Volha has written essays on Belarusian history, and published articles about her USA experience in two national newspapers.

### About FLEX-TAP

The Technology Ambassadors Program (TAP) is facilitated by Project Harmony and provides technology and leadership skills to FLEX students who are studying in the US. TAP is funded by the US Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. This newsletter features updates of the TAP program and is published monthly.



Oleksandr Rosiysky of Ukraine during the TAP 2004 workshop

### Contact:

Project Harmony  
5197 Main Street Unit 6  
Waitsfield, VT 05673

Phone: (802) 496-4545  
Fax: (802) 496-4548  
E-mail: [flextap@projectharmony.org](mailto:flextap@projectharmony.org)  
<http://www.projectharmony.org/flextap>

## Protecting the Caspian Sea

Citizens of Turkmenbashi, Turkmenistan are learning to treasure the Caspian Sea, and are helping to develop strategies to protect this beautiful resource, thanks to the efforts of FLEX-TAP alumni Minara Ismailova (2004). During her participation in Project Harmony's Technology Ambassadors program in Vermont, USA, Minara created a digital story highlighting the dangers of pollution that currently threaten the Caspian Sea and surrounding communities. Upon returning home to Turkmenistan, Minara applied for and won a grant through the FSA Alumni Small Grants Program to implement her project in her home community.

The goals of Minara's project

include encouraging a cleaner beach by sharing knowledge about the dangers of pollution through presentations, and creating a group of individuals interested in the future of the Caspian Sea through a series of contests. Presentations will occur at the American Corner Center and the Turkmen-Turkish Language and Computer Center in Bashkent.

Some activities include: Digital Story presentation with audience discussion and action planning, Poster, Poetry, Art, Dance and Essay contests on the subject of the Caspian Sea, and a Beach clean-up day. Minara states, "It is important that students



A picture of the Caspian Sea used in Minara's digital story.

understand why it is necessary to protect the Caspian Sea and its surrounding environment now because a few years later, it may be too late."

Minara will travel to the capital city Embassy on October 12, to receive her grant funding. Congratulations!

## Let's Take Action!

Akbar Saidov of Tajikistan began putting skills gained in the Technology Ambassadors program to work in a Summer Leadership Camp sponsored by ACCELS. Akbar was selected to be one of the team leaders of the camp, and used the opportunity to begin implementing a portion of his Youth Engaging in Service (YES) program.

Using a model similar to the one used in TAP, Akbar taught a workshop on Active Citizenship to high

school students attending the camp. Participants discussed issues concerning youth and community, and

**"They realized that no matter where they live, regardless of their age, they can do good for their community and become active citizens."**

brainstormed possible solutions. Akbar guided the students through refining

their ideas, creating presentations, and how to actively gain supporters. According to Akbar, "They realized that no matter where they live, regardless of their age, they can do good for their community and become active citizens. And I am proud to tell that at the end they all shouted, 'We can make a change in our country.'" Akbar plans to continue his work through presentations to NGOs and grant applications.