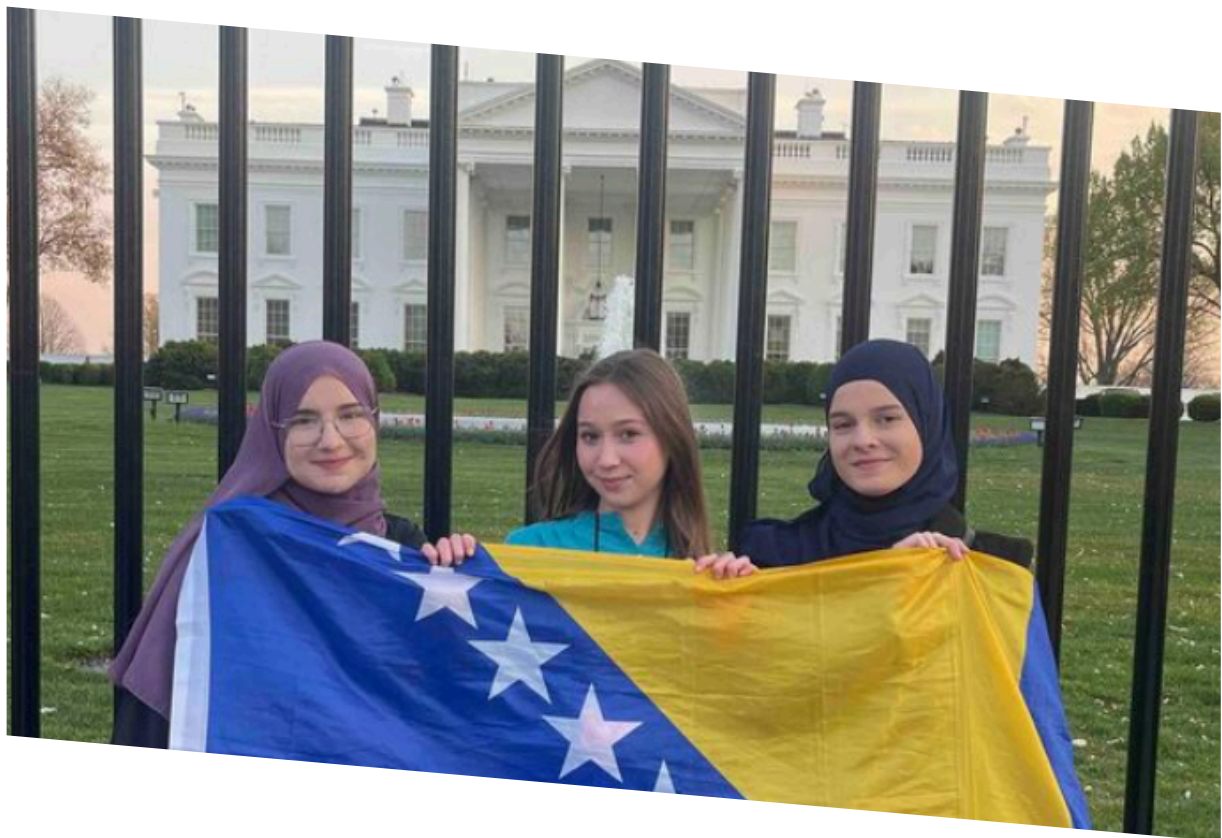




March 2024 NEWSLETTER

American Councils BiH
Kolodvorska 5, Sarajevo



- Civic Education Week
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Civic Education Week

As Washington, D.C., kicked off its second Civic Education Week Workshop for the program year 2024-25, we're thrilled to announce that our very own YES alumna Amina Meric ('20) was one of the alumni mentors at this special event for students currently on YES in the USA. Amina was joined by two of our current YES participants from BiH, Mersiha and Amila.



Our students visited the U.S. Department of State, where they engaged with dedicated staff involved in youth exchange programs. They also embarked on an insightful tour of Washington, D.C., and participated in a variety of workshops alongside peers from across the globe!

Civic Education Week

Besides collaborating on grassroots projects, participants had the incredible opportunity to meet state senators and their aides at Capitol Hill.

What a privilege!



BLI, YES Abroad and YES Alumni

Trivia Night

In March, we gathered YES Abroad students: Benji, Binisha, Delaney, Savannah, and Valeria, Balkan Language Initiative program participant Ryan, and a few YES alumni, along with staff members for a Bosnia and Herzegovina-themed Trivia Night!



YES alumna Silma prepared the trivia and the participants had a lot of fun trying to recall facts about Bosnia and Herzegovina that they learned during their time here!

Congratulations to Delaney for winning the amazing prizes!

BLI, YES Abroad and YES Alumni

Visit to Mostar

YES alumni Toni Bevanda ('17) from Mostar, together with program staff helped promote the YES at the American Corner in Mostar in March.

At the same time, YES Abroad students and Balkan Language Initiative participant Ryan also presented the USA and their home states to the curious Mostar audience.



BLI, YES Abroad and YES Alumni

Visit to Mostar

After the presentation, participants explored the city and enjoyed the beautiful views.

No matter how many times they visit, our exchange students are consistently awestruck by the charm and beauty of Mostar and Herzegovina.



Students Featured in Their Host School's Magazine

Recognizing the enriching experiences YES Abroad students bring to their institution, one of the host high schools in Sarajevo, "Četvrta Gimnazija," decided to feature three of the YES Abroad program participants in their magazine, "Gimnazijalac."



When asked about what they learned in BiH, and what they want to pass on to their family and friends in the USA, Valeria said that she wants to teach them the Bosnian language, because it is the language they have never heard of. Also, she wants to continue to make Bosnian traditional food in the USA.

Articles in the School Magazine

"I want to teach them how to make Bosnian coffee, because it is so much better than ours (and with less sugar)" - said Delaney.

On the other hand, Binisha said that she will teach her US friends and family some Bosnian slang, traditional dance "kolo" and she will make them Bosnian pita to try.

BINISHA SHRESTHA

Kako je došlo do toga da se prijaviš na razmjenu učenika i dođeš u BiH?

"Uvijek su me zanimale različite kulture, a kada sam saznala za ovaj program mislila sam da je to odlična prilika da upoznam jednu daleku zemlju i njenu kulturu."

U kojoj državi u Americi živiš i koliko se ta država razlikuje od BiH?

"Živjela sam u Bensalemu, Pennsylvania. Najveća razlika između Amerike i BiH koju sam primijetila je javni prijevoz i dostupnost svemu."

Kakav je obrazovni sistem dvije spomenute zemlje?

"Obrazovanje u BiH ima rigorozniji i sadržajniji nastavni plan i program od onih u Americi."

Šta ti se najviše, a šta najmanje dopada ovdje?

"Ovdje mi se dopadaju ljudi, jer su svi iskreni i ljubazni, a ne sviđa mi se to što nema mnogo sekcija/klubova u školama i druženja oko zajedničkih interesa."

Postoji li nešto što si naučila u BiH i što ćeš sigurno naučiti svoje prijatelje u Americi?

"Sigurno ću ih naučiti da igraju kolo, bosanski "sleng" i obavezno ću im napraviti krompirušu da probaju."



06 GIMNAZIJALAC

YES Alumni

Ramadan Presentation and Iftar Potluck

On March 13, YES Alumna Silma organized a presentation about Ramadan and an Iftar for YES Abroad students, Balkan Language Initiative participant Ryan, and AC staff!

The students had a lot of fun learning about Ramadan and the traditions that surround it. Everyone had to bring some food for Iftar as it was a potluck event, and everyone enjoyed it!



YES Alumni

Instagram Takeover

On March 21, YES Alumni Coordinator, Mia Krcum, took over our Instagram page to help promote the YES program. Mia shared captivating stories and insights that resonated with prospective applicants.

During the Instagram takeover, Mia answered followers' questions, offering candid insights into the daily lives of exchange students, from navigating cultural differences to forming bonds with host families.

Furthermore, Mia shared captivating photos, giving a glimpse into the diverse experiences that make up each day on the exchange program. This ultimately inspired and informed our audience about the transformative journey that awaits.

Leveraging social media in this way is crucial as it allows us to connect directly with our target audience, showcasing real-life experiences and fostering genuine interest in our program through authentic and relatable content.



Thank you,
Mia!

YES Alumni

Promotion of the YES program on TV

Beyond the Instagram takeover, Mia also took the opportunity to promote YES on a cantonal channel, TVSA, engaging with a wider audience in real-time.



During the live TV program, she passionately shared personal stories, emphasizing the program's impact on cultural understanding, and highlighting the invaluable connections forged with host families.

Mia's televised promotion not only showcased the program's benefits but also inspired prospective participants to embark on their own life-changing exchange experiences.

YES Alumni

Presentation About Women in History and Women's Rights

On March 5, City Representative Katarina Pasic '23 organized a presentation in her local high school in Prijedor where she covered the topics of women in history and women's rights.

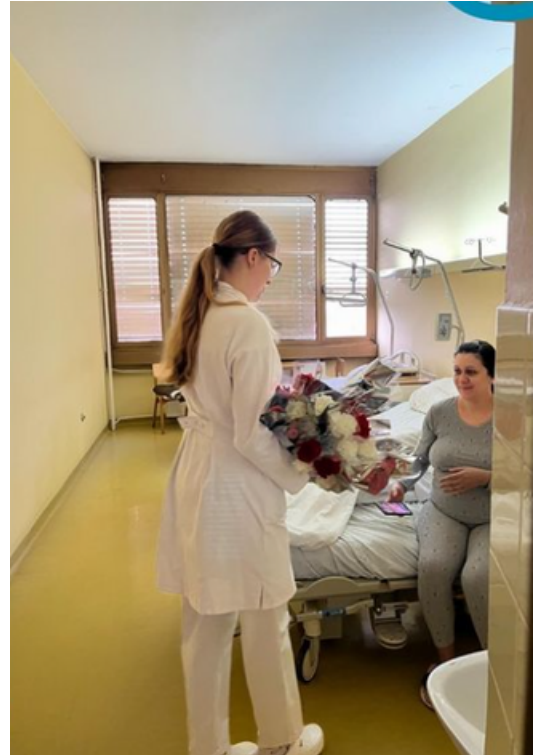
Afterward, Katarina held a discussion and a debate about whether women are equal to men in traditional Balkan households, and around 25 people took part in it.



YES Alumni

Visit to the Women's Clinic for International Women's Day

On March 8, Katarina and three friends gifted flowers to 40 female patients in internal medicine, oncology, and gynecology departments at the public hospital in Prijedor. There were a few tears, and plenty of hugs from patients, which made Katarina and friends very grateful to have the chance to do something amazing and thoughtful in their community. The purpose of this project was to show care to all these amazing and brave women, but also to teach young people about the importance of women in our society!



YES Alumni

Fundraiser in Mostar

On March 8, International Women’s Day, the city representative for Mostar, Nika Banovic ‘23, organized a fundraiser in her high school “Gimnazija Mostar” to collect money for local women in need. Nika, along with the help of her friends, made muffins, stickers, and bookmarks, and completely sold out raising a total of \$150! All of the proceeds were used to buy women's necessities, basic hygiene, and cosmetic products and were donated to the women who needed them the most. Around 70 people attended and shopped at Nika’s booth! Nika’s project was organized with the help of a local nonprofit organization, ‘Gledaj srcem’.



Balkan Language Initiative

Visiting Sarajevo's City Hall

Besides participating in a lot of the activities with YES Abroad, YES Alumni, and program staff, Balkan Language Initiative participant Ryan got the chance to visit Sarajevo's City Hall.



**Thank You for Reading Our
Monthly Newsletter!**

