



# September 2023 NEWSLETTER

American Councils BiH  
Kolodvorska 5, Sarajevo



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## YES Program Promotion

During September, we held a series of presentations about the YES program. We started with an online Zoom presentation in cooperation with friends from Education USA and YES alumni. We continued program promotion in person in different cities. In September, the American Councils office in Sarajevo organized promotions and presentations at:

- American Corner Zenica
- Četvrta Gimnazija High School in Sarajevo
- American Corner Mostar
- American Corner Tuzla



# YES PY 2024-25



We sincerely thank our hosts and YES alumni Mia, Dajana, Nika, and Silma for joining us and sharing their experiences on the program!

# YES PY 2024-25

In addition to the in-person and online presentations, YES alumni Mia, Silma, and American Councils program staff taped an interview with BHRTI (BiH National Radio Station) promoting the YES program!

Using a platform like BHRTI for promotion amplifies the YES program's reach and effectively enhances its credibility, local relevance, and stability. It engages a broad audience while adding a personal touch to the promotion, making it a valuable asset in your outreach efforts.



# YES PY 2023-24

## YES PY 2023-24 Departure to the USA

The last two YES program students from Bosnia and Herzegovina, generation 2023-24, departed for the USA on September 10.



Safe travels to Dina and Aldin, and lots of success to you both over the next year in the USA!

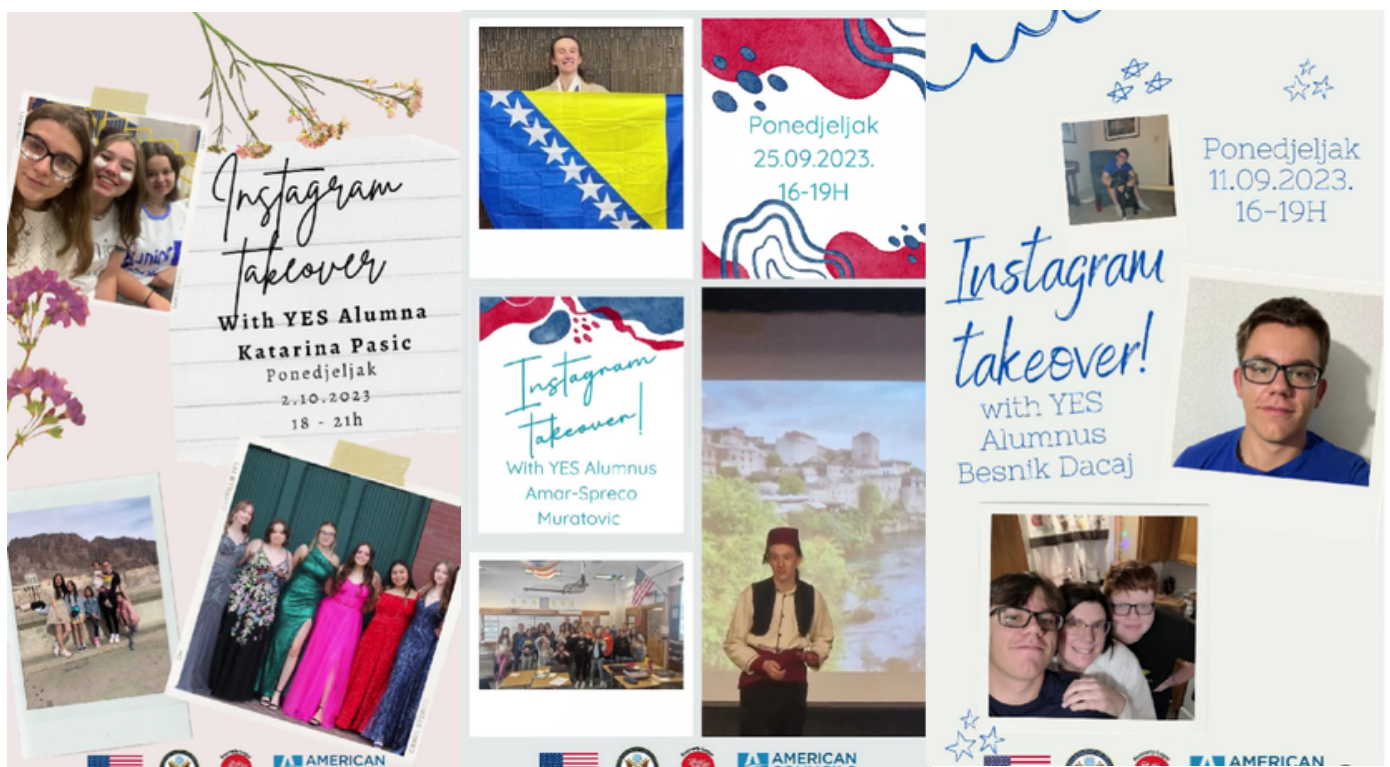
# YES Alumni

## YES Alumni Instagram Takeovers

In September, multiple YES Alumni from BiH shared their experience and stories via Instagram.

During the Instagram takeovers, alumni answered questions about the YES program, life in the United States, schools, and living with their host families, as well as questions about the applications for the program from interested applicants.

Thank you, YES alumni, for sharing this vital information with interested applicants!



# YES Alumni

## World Cleanup Day 2023

World Cleanup Day 2023, a global environmental initiative, united millions of volunteers across the planet in a massive effort to clean up litter and waste, demonstrating the power of collective action for a cleaner, more sustainable world.

Our World Cleanup Day event, organized by YES Alumni Coordinator Mia Krčum '22, occurred on Saturday, September 16. With the help of English School Helen Doron Sarajevo pupils and YES Abroad students Benjamin, Binisha, Delaney, Valeria, and Savannah, they cleaned up Vilsonovo Šetalište. They used that time to share each other's cultures, as well as help the pupils practice their conversational English skills.



# YES Abroad

## US Embassy Visit

On September 7, the five YES Abroad students: Benjamin, Binisha, Valeria, Delaney, and Savannah, had the chance to visit the US Embassy in Sarajevo together with program staff.

The cohort had the chance to meet various Embassy staff including H.E. Mr. Michael Murphy, the U.S. Ambassador to BiH. Students talked about their experiences in Sarajevo so far and participated in an interview, explaining why they chose the YES Abroad program and Bosnia and Herzegovina.





# Balkan Language Initiative

## " The Art of Routine and the Joy of Exploration in Sarajevo"

Sydney Stotter, a participant in the Balkan Language Initiative Program for the summer semester of 2023 in Sarajevo, has graciously shared a captivating article she authored while residing in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Below, you'll find Sydney's insightful piece:

"Since arriving in Sarajevo last month for my summer term studying Bosnian with the Balkan Language Initiative (BLI), my days have become organized around a now-familiar routine: classes, meetings with my conversation partner, exploring the city, and spending time with my host family.

During the week, a lot of my time is spent in class: I meet with three teachers one-on-one for a total of 15 hours per week, and although this intense schedule seemed extremely daunting at the beginning, it's been both rewarding and fun. Over the course of the past month, I've noticed a significant improvement in my ability to speak, understand, and read in Bosnian—my vocabulary is expanding, I'm speaking more competently, and when I make mistakes, I'm often able to notice them and correct them myself. My three teachers—Hana, Nalda, and Zerina—are all wonderful and very dedicated to helping me learn. Given that I'm currently doing my PhD in Slavic Languages and Literature, they have begun introducing me to both contemporary and classic Bosnian literature: we read aloud together in class, and last week we visited the Museum of Literature and Performing Arts (Muzej književnosti i pozorišne umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine); we even attended a live conversation with an author at Bookstan, a literary festival held each year in the Skenderija neighborhood of Sarajevo.

# Balkan Language Initiative

## " The Art of Routine and the Joy of Exploration in Sarajevo"

My homework assignments serve the dual purpose of developing my language skills and helping me learn about the city, Bosnian history, and current events. For instance, during my first week of class I received an assignment to visit the Museum of Jewish History (Muzej Jevreja Bosne i Hercegovine) and note down five new facts that I learned; during my second week, I had the assignment to buy an issue of *Oslobodjenje*, one of Bosnia's leading newspapers, and report on what I had read the following day. I of course, used this task as an excuse to sit outside and read the paper while enjoying a leisurely post-class coffee, which is itself an integral component of cultural life in the city.

At home with my host family, when meeting with my conversation partner, and taking in Sarajevo on my own—coffee is always obligatory. Some of the first new vocabulary words that I learned after arriving in the country had to do with coffee, as my host mother demonstrated for me the traditional Bosnian technique for brewing and drinking one's coffee. Outside the home, meeting for coffee with a friend can often last for two or three hours, and is a beloved daily ritual across Bosnia. Every café in Sarajevo seems to have its own personality, from traditional ones serving strong Bosnian coffee brewed in a *džezva* (a small pot with a long handle) to al fresco European-style cafes serving espresso, and even some teahouses too.



# Balkan Language Initiative

## " The Art of Routine and the Joy of Exploration in Sarajevo"

With one month left before I depart from Sarajevo, I'm looking forward to perfecting my skills in ordering coffee in Bosnian and continuing to read more literature and news in Bosnian while I'm doing it.

After visiting the Museum of Literature and learning about the twentieth-century Bosnian author Meša Selimović, I am hoping to read one of his most well-known novels, *Tvrđava* (*The Fortress*).



By Sydney Stotter

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

