

December 2012

Vol. 4, Issue 11



The A.P.P.L.E. Seed

(American Professional Partnership
for
Lithuanian Education)

E-Zine

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Dear John,



Karl Janowitz

Message from the President

The wonderful American holiday of Thanksgiving has just passed when hopefully we have reflected and given thanks for all we have. Now we are in the midst of that

special time of the year leading to Christmas.

Holidays give us the opportunity to reflect on our lives and to re-examine all that is important to us. I am so happy to reflect on A.P.P.L.E.'s past accomplishments and on our current endeavors.

I want to wish you a very merry Christmas, a marvelous holiday season, and a fine New Year. I sincerely thank you for all you do and have done for APPLE. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

All my best wishes,

Karl

Dr. Karl P. Janowitz
President

Mission Statement:

"The American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education (A.P.P.L.E.) is a volunteer international non-profit educational organization. With the support of the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science, A.P.P.L.E. partners with Lithuanian educators to foster the implementation of innovative educational approaches that contribute to the development of a democratic society."

A.P.P.L.E. Member Profile - Audre Druckute Ruzga



Audre Druckute Ruzga

1991 marked a major transition in my personal life and in Lithuania. As Lithuania shed the yoke of communism, I acted on an opportunity to immigrate to the U.S. For me this was a year of dramatic change. I was born in Radviliskis and grew up in Kaunas. My mother was a math teacher. As a child I remember asking her to help me with my arithmetic homework. She asked me "What is the problem?" I eagerly ran to get my book to read her the challenging question. As soon as I started to read, she stopped me and said, "I didn't ask you to read me the problem. I want you to read the question and then come back and tell me the problem". I sat down and concentrated on understanding the question. Of course, once I understood the question the problem was solved. I think teaching was in my blood. My mother's estimation of my aptitude for math coupled with expectations for academic performance shaped my decision to become a math teacher. My mother taught me that learning is not automatic. You

must learn how to apply yourself to expand understanding. I graduated from Vilnius Pedagogical Institute in 1983, receiving a degree in math education. For eight years previous to leaving Lithuania I taught math to 4th to 9th graders in Kaunas.

When first arrived in the U.S. I attended community college. I acquired an additional degree in education, but equally importantly familiarized myself with the community, American English, and the educational system. I resumed my teaching career in New Jersey, quite different from Kaunas. Though I have taught in a couple schools, for the last 12 years I have been a geometry teacher at Toms River High School.

Teaching in the US is similar to teaching in Lithuania in many ways, but when I think about teaching in each country a few differences come to mind. Something I never experienced when I was new to teaching is the support given new teachers in this country. I have served as a mentor, and have seen that pairing a new teacher with a veteran can be a valuable partnership. I don't know whether it is because Lithuanian teachers are hesitant to admit that they need advice, or the Lithuanian tradition of self-sufficiency, but when I started teaching I did not have access to peer support. I find this an effective practice in building the confidence of young teachers while at the same time acknowledging the expertise and cultivating leadership among experienced teachers. Another difference that comes to mind is class size. My classes in Lithuania were large, typically around 40 students compared to no more than 30 here, but those larger classes were easier to manage. It seems to me that the challenge of classroom management is related to the student's value of education. On average Lithuanian students appear to value education more and it is reflected in classroom behavior. Parents there highly value education and communicate to their children an expectation for them to strive to do their best.

I have been an A.P.P.L.E. member for several years and some of you who have participated in A.P.P.L.E. summer sessions may have met my sister Birute Druckute, an A.P.P.L.E. interpreter, who is also a teacher. Over the years I have helped the organization by translating teaching materials into Lithuanian for use by American lecturers. I am pleased to have been elected to the board of A.P.P.L.E. and look forward to continuing my involvement. The educational training that I received in Lithuania forms the foundation of my teaching practices. I know from living and teaching in both countries that when an exchange of ideas occurs, such as what happens in the partnership opportunity provided by A.P.P.L.E., it fosters professional growth for all.

Invitation to Quality Reviews in Lithuania

In the spirit of cooperation, the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) would like to invite experts to participate in the international teams (consisting of both foreign and local experts) for study program and institutional reviews in Lithuania in 2013-2014.

Established in 1995, SKVC is an independent public agency which implements external quality assurance policy in higher education in Lithuania, and contributes to the development of human resources by creation of enabling conditions for free movement of persons. Regular activities of SKVC include evaluation and accreditation of study programs and higher education institutions. We are full member of such professional networks as ENQA, CEENQA, and INQAAHE. The agency website is at www.skvc.lt.

Requirements for experts:

- Good knowledge of Bologna process and European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG),

their collections with new books.

Last year, 17 thousand books were collected for the public libraries of Lithuania. The president wishes to create a Christmas miracle this year as well.

"This Christmas season we can help local schools enrich their libraries with new books. We can make exciting and interesting books available to the children of Lithuania so that they learn to think, create and discover the world," the President says.

A special list of titles has been created through the collective effort of more than 1,000 schools. It includes books for children and teenagers by foreign authors, encyclopedias and dictionaries. Please see the complete list at www.kygukaledos.info

Books can be donated directly to local schools or purchased at books stores participating in the campaign.

From November 19th to January 6th special stands will be put up at the Vega, Pegasus and Knygu Namai

Fundraising Corner

The end of the tax year is the perfect time to make a gift to A.P.P.L.E.

You may click on the button below to make a donation using PayPal.

What will different levels of donations accomplish?

- For \$100, you can provide an ink cartridge and paper so that A.P.P.L.E. can distribute lesson notes to teachers.
- For \$200, you can provide a stipend for a translator.
- For \$450, you can underwrite the distribution of our newsletter.
- For \$500, you can sponsor a Scholar's Fund Grant.

A minimum donation of \$25-individual or \$40-family will enroll you as a member of A.P.P.L.E. for one year.



A.P.P.L.E. is a 501(3)c organization, which means that your gifts are tax-deductible. Our tax-exempt number is 23-2682202. Because of strict IRS regulations, we cannot accept donations intended for specific people. If you would like to support relatives or friends, please do so directly. The A.P.P.L.E. scholar grants are intended for Lithuanian educators who do not have contacts in the United States.

This electronic newsletter is designed for quick delivery of A.P.P.L.E.-related news to an audience that includes current A.P.P.L.E. members, friends of A.P.P.L.E. and interested potential members both within the United States and Lithuania.

Increasing communication and the exchange of ideas among our members increases the strength of our organization and our ability to be relevant to our Lithuanian constituents. Exciting and pertinent events occur all year round, and we want to keep

all of you abreast of what is happening, when it's happening.

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