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Greetings!



Karl Janowitz

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Personal Reflections - Twenty Five Years of A.P.P.L.E.

Karl P. Janowitz, President

The A.P.P.L.E. Board of Directors has decided that its mission has been accomplished and A.P.P.L.E. will close after 25 years of contributing to educational reform in Lithuania. As Lithuania was re-emerging as a democratic and independent country, it became clear that a reformed educational system would be key to these incredible changes. A.P.P.L.E. began in 1990, and the first seminars were held in 1991. The partnership between American and Lithuanian educators blossomed, and we can reflect on 25 successful years. We have witnessed remarkable changes and shared experiences that have transformed all of us.

A.P.P.L.E. served thousands of teachers and administrators, and through them, touched countless students and their families. Our focus continually shifted to reflect emerging issues and priorities, expressed through needs assessments and feedback. We changed and expanded locations of our seminars from only Vilnius to include other regions, cities, and towns, to be sure to have the widest impact possible.



Special education seminars became an increasingly important focus, as changes in how students with disabilities were viewed impacted society as a whole. As in other areas, the location of the seminars branched out, ultimately centered in Kaunas and encompassing a variety of educational structures and settings. Camp Viltis, sponsored by the Lithuanian Welfare Society for Persons with Mental [Intellectual] Disability, provided another opportunity for A.P.P.L.E. to reach parents and

caregivers of children with disabilities, teachers and other personnel for an enriching summer camp experience.

The Lithuanian Scholars' Fund was an innovative initiative begun in 2006 to support the participation of Lithuanian teachers, seeding projects that teachers could implement in their classrooms. In this way, the content and strategies presented in A.P.P.L.E. seminars were directly translated into educational practice.

As A.P.P.L.E. closes I reflect that we could not have done this without everyone who has served on the Board of Directors over the years; individuals who volunteered their time in a myriad of tasks including but not limited to organizing and teaching the Seminars; and our generous donors who kept the organization financially healthy. The list of names would be too long to mention here. Since 1992, I have been enriched to meet so many dedicated individuals and make steadfast friends on both sides of the Atlantic. Please know that my personal thanks goes to each and every one of you who made A.P.P.L.E. unique and effective.

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."

Lithuanian Scholars' Fund Update

Evaluations of Lithuanian Scholars Fund Grant proposals have been completed and the final grants are currently being made. The final set of grants are being awarded for 23 proposals selected by our evaluators. A total of 9,210 Euros is being distributed. This brings the total number of projects awarded since the inception of the program in 2006 to 209. The total amount of funds distributed is difficult to calculate given changes in currency and variable exchange rates, but it is safe to say that it amounted to several 10s of thousands of dollars. Without our supporter's generosity, these projects, which have touched thousands of students, their schools, and communities would not have been possible!

A list of this year's winners and their proposal titles are posted on the [A.P.P.L.E. website](#).

A.P.P.L.E. Archives

As A.P.P.L.E. closes its doors, we are making a final call for historical documents you may have that would be appropriate for A.P.P.L.E.'s archives. The archives are located at American Lithuanian Cultural Archives (ALKA) in Putnam, CT. If you believe you have documents or photos that should be included in the archives, please contact Giedre Stankunas [giedrestankunas@gmail.com].

A.P.P.L.E. Video - Final Call

At the reception for A.P.P.L.E. held at the Lithuanian Embassy in 2015, a short video with a collection of photos and media clips was shown by Amanda Muliolis. At that point it was a work in progress. The DVD that she has prepared contains several presentations - one is all 25 years in pictures and which is 90 min. long. The pictures were placed into 5-year segments. The pictures are shown with background music. Also included is the 10-year presentation prepared by Romas

Sakadolskis. A short video from the beginning of the 15-year celebration in Vilnius and a sound recording of the opening speeches in Klaipėda on our 20-year celebration by President Adamkus and Barbara Henriques as well as the A.P.P.L.E. facts file listing most of our accomplishments during the 25 years are included. The cost of the DVD is \$10.00 and can be ordered by sending the money and your correct address to Amanda Muliolis, 1820 Dansy Dr. Euclid, OH 44117-2010.

Questions may be directed to Amanda at atmuliolis@gmail.com

The Last Word

I titled this article, "The Last Word" not to speak on behalf of the organization, but simply this EZine, which I have had the pleasure of editing for the last 4 years. It is hard to believe that I was able to pull together over 40 issues. I also believe it has turned out to be a great way of communicating the latest news about A.P.P.L.E. to its loyal supporters and followers.

While we realize that some people still prefer paper communication to electronic news, the realities are that electronic news is generally easier and quicker to produce and send, while saving money for other worthwhile efforts. That is certainly been true for A.P.P.L.E., as this EZine became the organization's best venue for communication of news to an email list that now numbers about 250 people. For that we have to thank Ed Topar and Gail Cassidy, who had the foresight to implement the EZine in late 2009. Since then it has evolved to cover strictly news of the organization and "education-related" items that are of interest to our volunteers, teachers, and supporters.

I tried to continue the individual profiles of the many A.P.P.L.E. volunteers when information was available. My apologies if you felt you should have been included, but were overlooked. I thank everyone who was profiled for their cooperation in submitting articles about themselves and reflections on what drew them to volunteer and their memorable experiences.

I also thank the contributors of other articles, whether they were general information articles or personal summaries of their summer experiences. In particular, I wish to thank Anita Scarborough, who provided many articles and accompanying photos when I was desperate for information. I tried to limit my editing by simply copying and pasting what was supplied to me with minor corrections for English grammar. My apologize for instances when I was not able to simply cut and paste names and words with Lithuanian characters due to restrictions imposed by the software used to generate the EZine. Overall it has been a great run for A.P.P.L.E. and for the EZine. I admit I will look forward to a little more free time at the beginning of each month, but am glad I was able to contribute to A.P.P.L.E. in this small way.

Thanks for reading. I hope to see you at a future Lithuanian event or maybe even while cycling the Lithuanian countryside!

John Baltrus

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. Note that because of compositional software constraints, we are not able to include proper Lithuanian characters in words and names.

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.

Consider passing this email along to a friend who you think might be interested in hearing about us.

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