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Elena, Ksenia, Lena, Roman, Nina, Dr. Briers, Rita, Dr. Chumakov, Oksana, and Masha

Who We Are?

People

By: Helen Balabonova

These are some brief characteristics of the Russian students that were chosen to participate in this collaborative study abroad program. We are all the students of Moscow State Agroengineering University. We study in the same department, engineering-pedagogical department. Our specialization is engineer-interpreter. We were selected to participate in this program because of our high level of academic achievement.

Elena Kosova: She lives in the hostel during the weekdays, while on weekends she sometimes goes to the town of Volokalamsk, where her parents live. She has an elder brother who also lives in Moscow with his family. She likes sports, listening to popular music, and she likes eats porridge without sugar and milk!

Ksenia Zhilko: She lives in Moscow with her parents and her dog, Gene. She loves him very much and often takes him on walks. Ksenia likes to drive a car and go to the cinema.

Maria Pospeshnova: Masha, as we like to call her, is our boss. She is a very responsible and attractive. Everybody in our group can rely on her.

Field Trips

Activities

By: Roman Martinov

During the last month we have had several field trips including a greenhouse, Kunakova Farm, Danone Company, Caterpillar Company and a visit to the city of Sergiev Posad.

The green house we went to is the biggest greenhouse I've ever seen. Its area is 114 hectares and it's the second largest greenhouse in Russia. They grow a lot of different vegetables there. One of the managers said they supply Moscow and Moscow region with horseradish, lettuce, flowers, dill and spinach. We all enjoyed this trip and American students said that there are no such big greenhouses in America so we were very proud of Russia.

Students were able to visit the Kunakova Cooperative Farm that had beef, dairy and a meat-processing factory. It is 150 kilometers north from Moscow; it has 5000 hectares of forestry land; 4000 hectares of forage fields; 1000 head of cattle, half of which are dairy cattle; and 1000 head of production hogs for the meat processing plant. I think this farm needs some money investments to operate at its full potential.

She helps to organize field trips and tries to solve different problems. She is also a great dancer.

Oksana Anisimova: She was born in Kiev, the Ukraine. Now she lives in a hostel during the week and on the weekends, she usually goes to Mozhaisk where her family lives. She has a younger brother and a sister. Oksana teaches the first year students in MSAU and enjoys preparing different tasks for them. She knows the languages Ukrainian, English, and, of course, Russian. She also likes traveling.

Nina Kochurayua: She lives with her family in Jstra, not far from Moscow. She likes different kinds of sports, going to the cinema, and dancing. She also teaches first year students at MSAU and works as an interpreter at a firm. All her free time she spends playing with her nephew. Her dream is to teach American students Russian language. She believes they are more honest and kind people.

Margarit Belyava: During the weekdays she usually stays in a hostel and on weekends goes home. She lives in a military town not far from Moscow. Her family has a small farm with five cows, several calves, three dogs, cats and many chickens. She is a very purposeful, hard-working student. She also teaches first year students in MSAU.

Roman Martinov: He is the only man in our group. We love him very much because he plays the guitar, boxes, likes to drink beer with his friends.

Helen Balabonova: She lives in the hostel and on weekends she always goes to see her family. She has a brother that is sixteen. She helps him to do his home work and says every time she begins to help her brother she is ready to pull her hair out. On weekends, she spends almost all the time with her dog. Helen like to go to the theaters and plays the piano.

On our visit to Danone Company, we saw their process of yogurt making and it was very interesting. They use only natural components for their products. I did not expect to see such a high-tech factory here. At the end of our excursion, we were offered to try Danone yogurts—nobody disagreed. I think none of us ate so many yogurts at one time before. I couldn't even look at yogurts for a week after this trip. But now I'm buying only Danone yogurts.

We visited Caterpillar Company. They produce many different kinds of machinery. At first we went to their Moscow office. There we had several speakers (one of them was general director of Caterpillar in Russia). They told us about Caterpillar's activities in Russia. Then we went to one of Caterpillar's dealers in Moscow region. They had many different tractors standing there and they were the best-looking tractors we have ever seen in Russia. The prices are a little bit high for Russian farmers but I think after using Caterpillar tractors our farmers will not want to return to Russian tractors.

Sergieiev Posad is a small town in Moscow region.

We visited Lavru Sergia Radonezhskogo. It is an ancient monastery. Then we went to the Agricultural College. It is a college for farmers who want to increase their knowledge in agriculture. There is an extension office working in this college where farmers can go when they need consultation. After visiting the college we went to a private farm. Farmers Galena and Valeriy have had this farm for ten years already. It was very interesting there and we think that they are just beginning to develop their business.



Nina and Lena K. working in the computer lab

Being Chosen

By: Lena Kosova

The program of collaborative education and students from both Russia and America at Moscow State Agro-engineering University has been in affect for 3 years. This year our group of Russian students participated in this program. The eight of us are third-year students from Engineering-Pedagogical Department; our major is Engineering and English language. There are 21 other students that are apart of our group that studies together for all of our fives years at the University.

First, we all have heard about the program before and we were interested in participating in it. We also knew that as the third-year students we were eligible for this year program. Being interested, last summer one of our students, Masha, approached our dean of International-Education Department and asked him to think about our group of thirty students as candidates to participate in this program. We felt like we were good candidates, because we were doing well in our subjects and, were interested in agriculture, communications, and English language.

Second, our dean of International-Education Department, Dr. Chumakov, took our group to teach us tractors and to know us closer. With this opportunity to impress a major decision maker in the program, we started doing our best, to be



Roman working hard at having fun

Professors

Courses

By: Nina Kochurayeva

I am sure that all Russian students really do appreciate studying with American professors. We were lucky and very glad to have the opportunity to study with Dr. Briers, Dr. Buffington, and Dr. Rockwell.

All courses were very interesting and useful for Russian students as well as American students. We learned Innovations and Technologies in Agriculture with Dr. Briers, he is from Texas University; Environmental Impacts on Biological Systems with Dr. Buffington from Pennsylvania State University; and Planning and Evaluation Extension Programs by Dr. Rockwell from University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

I cannot state that American professors are different from Russian significantly. However, there are few differences, which should be mentioned. First of all in spite of the lack of time they tried to do their best and to give us as much information as possible. They also provided all the necessary data and information like handouts, student manuals, etc. Second, they asked us to give them feedback and they did read it, analyze and make some improvements if it was required.

chosen for this program. The group was then required to select the eight students that would participate in the program. That was not all; teachers from the Foreign Language Department had to approve the group's recommendations for the participants. Our performance in English was the criteria for this approval.

The approval from Dr. Chumakov, Dean of International-Education Department, was still required for us to participate. Finally, after all the procedures eight lucky students were chosen for this program. I think I can say for everybody, that our participation has been very enjoyable.

Our first professor was Dr. Briers. He was very animated and funny! He was energetic and enthusiastic. Dr. Briers became our American Dad! We enjoyed the time spent with him. On lessons he taught us to, "Think out of the box," and communication skills.

Dr. Buffington was very kind to us! The knowledge we got after his course was very valuable because we could apply it on the fieldtrips - farms, greenhouses, etc. Dr. Buffington was firm but fair!

Dr. Rockwell was the only woman among our American professors. She came with her husband Lee. She was reserved during her first days in Russia. But then everything got better. The course Dr. Rockwell taught us required much mental activities because we had to make projects, evaluation and developing programs.

The most part of work we used to do in pairs or groups of Russian and American students and at last, we became one team. All teachers contributed to it significantly. Even when our classes ended, we continue to communicate with them!

Thanks to all of our American professors for the wonderful time we spent together!!!!!!!!!!!!



Dr. Briers of Texas A&M, Dr. Buffington of Penn State, and Dr. Rockwell of the University of Nebraska

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