



S A B I T

**PROMOTING
PARTNERSHIPS,
GENERATING
RESULTS**

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SABIT EXCHANGE

JANUARY - MARCH, 2005 VOL 9, NO 1

Quarterly Newsletter of the SABIT Training Program • www.mac.doc.gov/sabit



A PROGRAM OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

SABIT Opens Annual Grant Program

In January 2005 SABIT opened its annual grant funding opportunity. SABIT grants support U.S. companies and organizations that wish to provide business executives and scientists from Eurasia practical training in a U.S. business setting.

Under the SABIT Grant Program, qualified U.S. organizations will receive funds through a cooperative agreement with the International Trade Administration (ITA) to help offset the costs incurred in hosting Eurasian trainees. SABIT will review Eurasian managers or scientists nominated by a participating U.S. companies, or assist in identifying eligible candidates. Trainees may be from any of the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. The training must take place in the United States.

The U.S. firms will be expected to provide the trainees with a practical, non-academic, executive training program designed to maximize their exposure to management skills or commercially oriented scientific operations. Such training includes strategic planning, financing, production, distribution, marketing, accounting, wholesaling, etc. This first-hand experience in the U.S. economy enables trainees to become leaders in the expanding market economies of Eurasia, and creates unique opportu-

nities for U.S. firms to familiarize key executives from Eurasia with their products and services.

For scientists, SABIT provides opportunities for them to apply their skills to peaceful research and development in the private sector, in areas such as defense conversion, medical research, and the environment. The training also exposes them to the role of scientific research in a market economy, where applicability of research relates to business success. Sponsoring firms in the U.S. scientific community also benefit from exchanging information and ideas with participants, and exposure to different approaches to new technologies.

SABIT Grant awards provide reimbursement for round trip international airfare for each trainee from their home city in Eurasia to the U.S. internship site, a stipend of \$34 per day for the trainees, and housing costs of up to \$500 per month (for cities with higher costs of living, up to \$750 per month may be reimbursed). Successful applicants will have one year from the date of award to complete the training.

Eligible applicants for SABIT Grant funding include all for-profit and non-profit U.S. corporations, associations, organizations, and private entities located in the United States.

Applications are available for download by registering on SABIT's website, or by contacting SABIT at SABITApply@ita.doc.gov, or (202) 482-0073.

Alumni News

Strategic Planning Training Seminar in Armenia

Benjamin Chapman

In late September 2004 SABIT organized a seminar in Yerevan, Armenia devoted to "strategic planning," which was open to all SABIT alumni in Armenia. The seminar, developed and conducted by Apricot Plus Training and Consulting Company Ltd., assisted 14 alumni in understanding the strategic planning process, applying analytical tools and methodology, and demonstrating a realistic approach to strategic planning. The two-day seminar was a success for all participants, and many of them noted that developing human capital is key to achieving strategic objectives. The seminar was followed by a reception held at the Marriott Armenia Hotel, where approximately



SABIT alumni in Armenia learn how to create a strategic plan in a two-day SABIT-sponsored seminar.

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SABIT Exchange

About

SABIT Exchange is published quarterly by the Special American Business Internship Training (SABIT) Program as a service to its clients. Founded in 1990, SABIT is a U.S. Department of Commerce initiative that awards grants to American organizations, and provides group training programs for Eurasian managers and scientists.

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Impact

"The SABIT interns of today become the entrepreneurs of tomorrow."

William H. Lash, III
Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Market Access and Compliance
U.S. Department of Commerce

- More than 1,000 organizations have trained over 3,300 Eurasian managers and scientists.
- SABIT has facilitated \$300 million in export revenues and overseas investment since 1990.

Articles by non-U.S. government employees express the views of the authors and should not be construed as a statement of U.S. government policy.

Armenian Alumni Gather for Training

[Continued from page 1]

25 SABIT alumni enjoyed the company of key Armenian business leaders, Armenian and U.S. Government officials, and leaders of non-governmental organizations. The reception was an opportunity for alumni to network and to share ideas and experiences with other SABIT past participants and other like-minded individuals.

As a SABIT Program Officer, I coordinated the seminar and reception, and visited two alumni at



SABIT Program officer Benjamin Chapman with Nork-Marash medical staff.

Lida Muradyan [NIS Hospital Administration 2001] welcomed me to her cardiological clinic at Nork-Marash Medical Center. Dr. Muradyan was proud of her medical team for their resourcefulness and dedication to providing the best possible care. Dr. Muradyan also discussed her recent travels to



SABIT alumni and friends unwinding at a networking event.

their places of work to experience a day in the life of a SABIT alumnus, and to learn about what has changed since their participation in the SABIT Program.

SABIT Q & A

Ridgetop Group and Eurasian Scientific Institutes Partner for Semiconductor Research through the SABIT Grant Program

Patrick Brennan

Ridgetop Group, Inc. has recently begun training four scientists under its third SABIT Grant in as many years. Ridgetop was founded in 2000, and is headquartered in Tucson, Arizona. Its mission is to provide semi-conductor IP design tools for improving the reliability of integrated circuits and electronic systems. By combining its expertise in Analog and Mixed Signal Integrated Circuits and its expertise in device physics, Ridgetop has quickly emerged

as a leader in innovative semiconductor design tools, such as impending device failure prognosis technology, analog-digital and digital-analog converters, and modeling technology.

In December I spoke with Milena Thompson, Ridgetop's Office Manager, about the company's participation in the SABIT Grant Program. The following is an excerpt of this conversation:



Yogurt being packaged and prepared for market at Ashtarak-Kat.

www.ashtarak-kat.com.

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Secretary Evans Meets with Georgian Prime Minister Zhvania

Danica Starks

On Thursday December 9, just over a year after Georgia's "Rose Revolution," Secretary of Commerce Donald L. Evans met with Zurab Zhvania, Prime Minister of the Republic of Georgia. Secretary Evans praised Zhvania and President Mikhail Saakashvili for their courage in implementing democratic reforms, combating corruption and integrating Georgia into the global economy. Additionally, Evans thanked Zhvania on behalf of the American people for increasing Georgia's troop presence in Iraq. Prime Minister Zhvania noted that Secretary Evans was the first foreign dignitary to meet with then President-elect Saakashvili and asked that the U.S. Department of Commerce help the Georgian government to attract trade and investment from the United States. Zhvania said that he was pleased with the progress

of reform in Georgia, including increased tax revenues, streamlining the state bureaucracy, and overhauling the police force. He asserted that these successes were due to the strong political will of the Georgian people. Secretary Evans pledged continued support for Georgia, and asked that Assistant Secretary William Lash and his staff work with their counterparts in the government of Georgia to find ways on working together to strengthen commercial relations in the coming year.



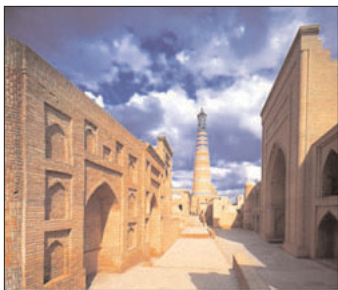
Secretary Evans greets Georgian Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania

Assistant Secretary Lash Meets with SABIT Alumni in Samarkand

Danica Starks

On November 11 Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Market Access and Compliance William H. Lash, III met with alumni of the SABIT program from Samarkand, Uzbekistan. Assistant Secretary Lash was visiting Samarkand as part of a two day visit to Uzbekistan for talks on bilateral commercial relations, and to support U.S. companies doing business there.

During his visit to Samarkand, Assistant Secretary Lash met with five alumni from various SABIT Program groups. Each alumnus began by speaking about his or her experiences in the United States, and noted the comprehensive way in which the program was managed from start to finish. Alumni praised the efforts of Tracy Rollins, Liza Sobol, Banat Ashkenova and Tatyana Pyak. They also noted that interpretation and logistical coordination of their trips was excellent. As SABIT is a program of the U.S. Commerce Department,



Uzbekistan remains a country of outstanding potential. The Department of Commerce continues to support bilateral trade and local entrepreneurship.

Assistant Secretary Lash was interested in how the program helped the alumni forge ties between the United States and Uzbekistan. Alumni noted that as a result of their SABIT experience they

were importing U.S. equipment, including Ford automobiles, and also implementing best practices learned during their SABIT training. Many of the alumni in attendance had participated in SABIT tourism programs, and upon returning to Uzbekistan they were able to conduct seminars for others in the industry.

Assistant Secretary Lash noted that tourism was an area that he felt Uzbekistan needed to maximize in order to create business opportunities. He reiterated this message to the Deputy Governor of Samarkand region.

After visiting Samarkand, Assistant Secretary Lash returned to Tashkent for meetings with officials from the Government of Uzbekistan. Assistant Secretary Lash thanked the government and people of Uzbekistan for their support of the war against terrorism and in Iraq. While the U.S.-Uzbekistan strategic partnership is strong, much needs to be done to build the commercial relationship.

Uzbekistan needs to work to create a more investor friendly business climate, including offering protection for intellectual property rights. Programs such as SABIT help in this regard as they give local entrepreneurs an opportunity to examine and implement relevant U.S. methods for doing business. Assistant Secretary Lash encouraged Uzbekistan to participate in regional activities to promote trade and investment. This would not only benefit the region as a whole but open up markets for Uzbek goods and services.



Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Market Access and Compliance, William H. Lash, III

SABIT Group Program

In the first three months of 2005 SABIT will implement four industry-specific group training programs designed to encourage U.S. exports to and investment in Eurasian markets. Currently, SABIT is recruiting interested U.S. companies and organizations to act as hosts for a half-day to two days of practical, professional training, including seminars, site visits and roundtable discussions. U.S. hosts are given the opportunity to introduce their products and services to Eurasian decision-makers in their industry. Delegates are mid- to upper-level management and engineers. The SABIT Group Program is an excellent way for U.S. firms to establish or extend business relationships in Eurasia.

Oil Pipelines (NIS)

January 15 - February 12

www.mac.doc.gov/sabit/pipelines.html

Contact: Benjamin Chapman

(202) 482-6492

benjamin_chapman@ita.doc.gov

Healthcare Administration (West NIS/Caucasus)

January 29 - February 26

www.mac.doc.gov/sabit/healthcarewnis.html

Contact: Frank Borghese

(202) 482-6430

frank_borghese@ita.doc.gov

Road Construction (West NIS/Caucasus)

February 26 - March 26

www.mac.doc.gov/sabit/roads.html

Contact: Erin Schumacher

(202) 482-3644

erin_schumacher@ita.doc.gov

Water Resource Management (Central Asia)

March 12 - April 9

www.mac.doc.gov/sabit/water.html

Contact: Erin Crouch

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Central Asian Executives Discuss Public-Private Partnerships with D.C. Government

Erin Crouch

On Wednesday, October 6, 2004 SABIT's Association Development: Economic Development for Central Asia delegation, met with the Office of Partnerships and Grants Development (OPGD) at the Executive Offices of the Mayor in Washington, D.C. The OPGD supports District government agencies, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations. Lafayette Barnes (Director, OPGD) and Pat Barnes (Manager of Nonprofit and Faith-based Organizations at OPGD) headed the meeting, which included presentations by local non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Representatives from D.C. Bar Pro Bono, Communities Always Bring Extra Love (CABEL), Columbia Heights Together, Art Enables, and Ramona's Way shared their experiences, missions, and answered questions from the 16 SABIT delegates, who represented the countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Eurasia Events

SABIT and BISNIS showcased at CIS Business Forum

The Russian Studies Department of the University of Arizona hosted its 9th Annual CIS and Eastern Europe Business Forum on November 5 - 6, 2004 in Tucson, Arizona. The conference, entitled "Success in the CIS and Eastern Europe" presented information on U.S. Government support, technology transfer, legal reform, investment, and financing. SABIT Marketing Coordinator, Patrick Brennan, made a presentation about the training programs offered by SABIT to support U.S. organizations' commercial activities in the Eurasian region. Milena Thompson followed this presentation with a case study of Ridgetop Group, Inc.'s participation in the SABIT



Roza Tsimkovitch (standing in back-ground) presides over the proceedings at the 9th Annual CIS and Eastern Europe Business Forum in Tucson, AZ.

Grant Program (see article pg. 2). There were several past participants of the SABIT Program in attendance, including John Aronson (President of AATA International, Inc.), Sharon Hekman (Executive Director of the Arizona-Kazakhstan Partnership Foundation), and John Rodgers (Director of Taurus Services). Ellen House and Igor Yegorov, representing the U.S. Department of Commerce's Business Information Service for the Newly Independent States (BISNIS) also presented resources available to U.S. companies that are interested in doing business in Eurasia. BISNIS offers several unique services to American investors in Eurasia, including publications such as Search for Partners, Trades and Tenders, FinanceLink and ExpoLink Eurasia. To learn more, visit BISNIS online: www.bisnis.doc.gov

The delegates asked many questions of their hosts, and compared their experiences with representatives of the NGOs here in the Washington, D.C. area. Common issues such as funding, staffing, projects, and collaboration were discussed. The delegates were impressed with the public-private partnerships described by the OPGD and the NGOs. To date, Ervin Owens of CABEL and Saltanat Syzdykova of the Association of Business Women, in Kyzylorda, Kazakhstan, have corresponded in hopes of planning a joint project.



The delegation of SABIT's Association and Economic Development for Central Asia program gathers with the staff of the Office of Partnerships and Grants Development of the Executive Office of the Mayor for the District of Columbia.

Civil Society in Policy Reform: Russian Economic Think Tanks

On September 9, 2004, SABIT International Trade Specialist Erin Crouch and SABIT Marketing Coordinator Patrick Brennan attended a policy forum in Washington, D.C. sponsored by the IRIS Center and BearingPoint, Inc., in cooperation with The Moscow Public Science Foundation.

The forum focused on defining the role of think tanks in Russia, including their potential for sustained growth and development. Speakers also discussed opportunities for cooperation between Russian and American economic think tanks. Eleven leading civil society specialists and experts from Russia attended, in addition to representatives from the Washington policy community. SABIT materials detailing the grants and group programs were distributed to the attendees. The SABIT Program's emphasis on promoting the development of civil society meshes well with the goals of think tanks, and representatives of these organizations may potentially act as conduits to encourage Eurasian participation in future SABIT Programs.



(L to R) Mikhail Dimitriev, Nadezhda Kosareva and Anders Aslund lead a panel discussion on Russian think tanks in the policy process.

Ridgetop Group's Semiconductor Training

[Continued from page 2]

SABIT: What is the extent of Ridgetop's involvement in the Eurasian markets?

RG: Well, from a business perspective, our activities in Eurasia are very limited. Basically, we have explored and undertaken collaborative research with a few scientific institutes. We have hosted and trained interns through the SABIT Grant Program since 2001. Through the SABIT Program we are trying to establish contact and coordinate technical exchanges with research institutes in Eastern Europe. Some of these institutes, with whom we have established ties with through the SABIT Program, are the Kiev Polytechnic Institute, and the Institute for Semi-Conductor Physics in Novosibirsk. We maintain regular communication with the interns from these institutes, and we follow up after the interns have returned to their countries.



Ridgetop President, Doug Goodman (left) shakes hands with Alexander Myasnikov, Ridgetop's most recent SABIT intern.

SABIT: What was Ridgetop's motivation for applying for SABIT funding?

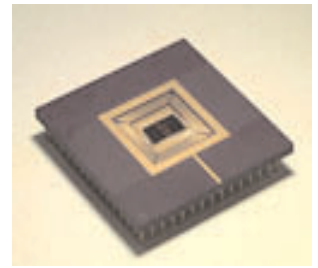
RG: Doug Goodman, President and CEO, attended the CIS Business Forum in 2000 and learned about the SABIT Program, and he felt it was a great mechanism whereby Ridgetop could work with research institutes throughout Eurasia, and he was very excited and applied for a SABIT Grant that same year. Thus, Ridgetop's motivation was to establish links and contacts for technological exchange with Eurasian institutes and scientists.



SABIT: What are the benefits to Ridgetop of SABIT participation?

RG: Well, we have been very lucky to train people with excellent educational and professional backgrounds. [The interns] have been working on current projects that Ridgetop has under development. In this way we have been able to leverage their knowledge base and professional expertise in certain fields to move various projects forward.

The key here is they get to participate in developing the technologies and applying them for commercial use. While we could conduct the same research without the interns, they provide significant assistance, and it's also useful for them to see how the research is applied to commercial products. Because they're mainly people from [public] research institutes as well, and they are not so familiar with commercialization and customer orientation, it is useful for them to see how we apply this research for a commercial product.



SABIT: What skills did Ridgetop trainees gain that will help them and their organizations to become better managers of technology and better researchers?

RG: For example, Evgeny Chernyavskiy was an intern in 2003. One of his personal goals in participating in the SABIT Grant Program was to finish his PhD thesis. Upon return to Novosibirsk he was able to incorporate the work conducted here at Ridgetop in his PhD thesis. Dr. Chernyavskiy's paper "Modeling, Fabrication and Test Results of a MOS Controlled Thyristor - MCT - with high controllable current density" was presented at the 27th International Conference on the Physics of Semiconductors, July 26-30, 2004, Flagstaff, Arizona by our CTO - Bert Vermeire. They are currently working on another presentation.

SABIT: What have been the results of Ridgetop's participation in the SABIT Program?

RG: There have been no new products, per se, but by maintaining contact with the interns we continue to involve them in the development of Ridgetop's products. No formal relationships have been established as yet. But there have been several meetings of the two sides. Our CTO has visited the Kiev Polytechnic Institute to further the relationship with representatives there.

The major benefit that [the interns] experienced was the participation in a small technology company where scarce resources are the norm, and everybody contributes to achieving success. They were able to see Western-style management practices and the customer service policies in action.

Doug Goodman, CEO of Ridgetop Group, Inc.

2005 Grant Program

SABIT will open the next Grant funding round in January 2005. Visit www.mac.doc.gov/sabit to learn more and to register to receive an application.