

Hosting Corner

HAMILTON, NY – Life in a trio of Urals-region villages with the unlikely names of Paris, Berlin, and Leipzig ... A remote community by Lake Baikal coping with the end of a railway construction boom ... Beslan two years after the 2004 terrorist school siege. These are the themes of three compelling documentary shorts that helped earn filmmakers Olga Stefanova, Anastasia Tarasova, and Igor Morozov selection as participants in Open World's 2008 Russian Cultural Leaders Program. Open World brought the three documentarians and St. Petersburg film curator Vasily Gusak to New York in June to take part in the legendary **Robert Flaherty Film Seminar** and to experience and contribute to New York City's film scene.

At the Flaherty Seminar, held this year at Colgate College in Hamilton, the Open World delegates attended film screenings and participated in the lively discussions that followed each. The Russians also talked shop with **Sundance Film Festival** representatives and presented a free public

screening of their own works. "The Russian Fellows were a valuable part of the 54th Robert Flaherty Film Seminar," says Tori Wunsch, Flaherty's communications and administration manager. "Many participants



Counterclockwise from left: Russian filmmakers Olga Stefanova, Anastasia Tarasova, and Igor Morozov with a poster announcing the June 28 screening of their selected works in Hamilton, NY.

commented that they appreciated the Russian filmmakers' unique worldviews on the Seminar topics of migration, identity, and documentary filmmaking."

In New York City, the filmmakers gave a second well-received screening of their works at **Anthology Film Archives**, which they followed up with a dynamic Q-and-A session with audience members. Another Big Apple highlight was meeting with **Tribeca Film Festival** organizers. New York City-based **CEC ArtsLink** coordinated the filmmakers' U.S. visit as part of its ongoing partnership with Open World on the Cultural Leaders Program.

The Russian delegates' featured films are available for online viewing through the links below:

- Igor Morozov:
"Phantom of Europe"
- Anastasia Tarasova:
"Children of the Great Lake"
- Olga Stefanova:
"Beslan. The Right to Live"

In the Field



Open World's Lewis Madanick (far left) meets with Tajikistani alumni on July 25 in Dushanbe.

DUSHANBE, TAJIKISTAN – Open World's **Lewis Madanick** caught up with eight Tajikistani alumni during a luncheon at a restaurant in downtown Dushanbe July 25. Madanick was in the Tajikistani capital to meet with government officials, participate in candidate selection for upcoming exchanges, and discuss future programs. Among the luncheon attendees were rule of law alumni hosted by **Iowa Sister States**, the **Sister City Program of Gainesville**

(FL), and **Washtenaw County** (MI); a water management expert hosted by the **Arkansas Council for International Visitors**, and a specialist from the Ministry of Agriculture hosted by the **Montana Center for International Visitors**. The lunchtime conversation focused on how the alumni had used their Open World experiences and how much they had enjoyed staying with American host families.

Making a Difference

GRAND RAPIDS, MI – In between observing court procedures and learning about U.S. legal education, six judges from Russia's Tuva Republic visiting Grand Rapids in late July also spent time meeting with local families with adopted children from Russia. During the meeting, held July 23 at **Bethany Christian Services Adoption Agency**, the parents shared their experiences with the Russian adoption process and described how they had welcomed their new children into their lives. The visiting judges were able to watch the interac-

tions between the adopted children and their new families, and to talk with the parents about how their children were being taught about their heritage. The judges in turn explained to the parents and Bethany staff how they deal with domestic and international adoptions in their courts. **U.S. District Judge Gordon Quist**, a veteran Open World host, and the **Rotary Club of Downtown Grand Rapids** conducted the

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Judges from Tuva, Russia, discuss international adoptions at Bethany Christian Services Adoption Agency in Grand Rapids, MI, on July 23.