

## Congressional Meetings

**WASHINGTON, DC** – June 11 was a busy day for the Open World Leadership Center, as two newly arrived Kyrgyzstani delegations—one headed for Kansas City, MO, the other for Orem, UT—each met on Capitol Hill with members of their host community's congressional delegation. The Kansas City-bound group, which included a deputy head of the **Kyrgyzstani Parliament's** press service and other media professionals, attended **Sen. Claire McCaskill's** weekly Thursday morning coffee for constituents visiting from Missouri. McCaskill aide Justin Vail and the delegates then discussed how meetings like these promote government accessibility and responsiveness. Later in the day, the Kyrgyzstanis had an informative Q-and-A session with the Show Me State's other

senator, **Kit Bond**, which his communications director, Shana Marchio, and Legislative Correspondent Joshua Kremer also attended. The **League of Women Voters of Kansas City, MO, Jackson, Clay and Platte Counties** is the delegation's local host.



Missouri Sen. Kit Bond (far left) and two aides meet on Capitol Hill with a Kyrgyzstani media delegation headed for Kansas City.

The second Kyrgyzstani delegation, composed mainly of library managers, sat down with Utah **Sen. Robert Bennett** for a discussion that wound up focusing on the checks and balances between the different branches of the U.S. government. **Rep. Jason Chaffetz**, who represents the delegation's host city of Orem, talked about the importance of government transparency while leading the Kyrgyzstanis through the Capitol's imposing Statuary Hall. **Utah Valley University** conducted the delegation's professional visit. Open World would like to remind all hosts of the importance of involving members of Congress in their programs. National Grantees: League of Women Voters, Academy for Educational Development

## In the Field

**WASHINGTON, DC** – State Department Spokesman **Ian Kelly** held a candid Q-and-A session on June 4 with a delegation of regional press secretaries from across Russia. Kelly, who taught Russian at Columbia University before joining the State Department in 1985, and whose previous position at State was director of the Office of Russian Affairs, told the delegates in Russian that he "jumped at the opportunity to meet with them." The group spent about an hour with Kelly, soaking up the experiences of a man who has one of the most challenging jobs in Washington.

Also present were Open World's Moscow-based deputy country director, **Yelena Yefremova**, Open World Public Affairs Officer **Maura Shelden**, and correspondent **Peter Cheryomushkin** of the Russian news agency **Interfax**: his article about the briefing is available at <http://tinyurl.com/kuquk4>. Before leaving, the Russians observed the State Department's briefing room, remarking that they liked its broadcast lighting fixtures and comfortable seating and writing areas. The group flew the next day to Chicago, where they were hosted by the **International Visitors Center of**

**Chicago.** National Grantee: Academy for Educational Development



Two Russian press secretaries enjoy the view from State Department Spokesman Ian Kelly's rostrum.

## Hosting Corner

**PRAIRIE VILLAGE, KS** – A June Open World trip helped cement a new sister-city relationship between the centuries-old western Ukrainian town of Dolyna



Prairie Village, KS Mayor Ron Shaffer (holding flags) with Open World delegates from his community's Ukrainian sister city, Dolyna.

and Prairie Village, a planned community outside Kansas City. **Barbara Dolci** of the **International Visitors Council of Greater Kansas City**—who helped give birth to the relationship by connecting leaders from both cities—hosted the exchange. The Dolyna contingent consisted of four *raion* (district) and city officials and a museum director. Dolci built individualized programming into their agenda with help from several **Prairie Village Sister City Committee** members. Museum director Tetyana Seniv, who is fluent in German, visited the 19th-century Shawnee Indian Mission with German-speaking committee chair Jim Hohensee. Two other committee members—architect

Rod Atteberry and Ukrainian-American Vera Glywa—provided an architectural tour of Prairie Village for Yaroslav Shyyak, who oversees city architecture and construction for Dolyna District, and **Dolyna City Council** Secretary Viktor Hoshylyk. City Comptroller Nadiya Popovych, accompanied by interpreter Olena Spivak-Bobko, met with her Prairie Village counterpart, Karen Kindle, and, in another peer-to-peer session, **Dolyna District Education Department** head Volodymar Spodar toured a local high school with the school district superintendent and the school principal, with facilitator Igor Sivash interpreting. National Grantee: U.S.-Ukraine Foundation