From Humble Beginnings...

“I can still remember the precise moment that I received the phone call from then SAS director Bill Richardson asking me to write a proposal for us to take students to Russia to work on a media project. I thought to myself, ‘Well, okay, but I don’t know anything about Russia.’ We received funding from UW Seattle and set off to Moscow with two UWT students for what was to be a one-time-only experience. Little did I know then just how popular the project would become during the next few years.” Dr. Chris Demaske, associate professor of communication at UWT

“We did not expect that the project would be so successful. It turned out to be so much more than just the creation of a to-produced international newspaper or website. For 10 years now, for two weeks a year—a week in Moscow and a week in Tacoma—we exercise real team building and writing classes and learn from each other professionally. I tried to figure out how many students participated during the past 10 years—at least 200. That’s a lot.” Dr. Maria Lukina, associate professor and deputy dean at MSU Department of Journalism

Massive Open Online Courses
MOOCs turn Internet into a global classroom

by Eva Reever

Massive open online courses (MOOCs) have been the most widely discussed trend in higher education since 2011 when the first several were developed by Stanford. MOOCs are online college classes offered through universities, in partnership with online platforms, which can be taken for free by anyone around the world. These courses, along with the growth of online education as a whole, are changing the nature of higher education.

“It’s perplexing, but it’s a really exciting time for educators,” said Colleen Carmean, Assistant Chancellor for Instructional Technologies at University of Washington Tacoma. “We get to reinvent what learning, what knowledge, what being smart, what education looks like.”

Whereas a decade ago, the validity of experimental online education was doubted by most quality universities, the opposite is true today. Harvard, Stanford, and MIT are all putting large amounts of money into MOOCs, and failing to follow suit leaves questions as to any large research university’s commitment to innovation.

Currently, closed online courses are producing the same, if not better, results as traditional classroom-based courses. Carmean explained that, while she thinks the traditional university model will go on forever in some form, it will see major changes as it moves away from the lecture model. It will become more technologically advanced method wherein instructors provide guidance for student led learning, in partnership with learning technologies.

She predicts that there will no longer be a “front of the classroom.” The internet is becoming a global classroom, and being smart is less about knowledge than it is about having the skills to obtain knowledge. Through experimentation with MOOCs, universities are able to provide a foundation for this new type of learning.

The University of Washington joined Coursera, one of several MOOC providers currently operating, in July of 2012, and has since developed several courses on the platform. As of fall 2012, the university has offered four courses. Dan Grossman, Associate Professor in the UW Department of Computer Science and Engineering, teaches Programming Languages on Coursera. While he has been successful in his goal of spreading knowledge to as many people as possible, Grossman’s experience has not been without its challenges.

Of the roughly 70,000 people who began his course, approximately 2,000 will finish. For each week of the course, 10 percent of the people stop participating due to other time commitments, a loss of interest, or because they fall behind.

“You have to accept that your course won’t really work for everyone,” Grossman said. While he has been successful in his MOOCs, Grossman does believe that MOOCs should not be compared to traditional courses. They are more like text books, in that, a textbook may be amazing but that does not mean students will not need a teacher’s help in order to understand the material.

“It’s a really great addition [but] I don’t think it should replace conventional courses,” he said.

While MOOCs are good in that they can be taken from anywhere at any time, and allow students to interact with a global community, they lack the advising and personal connection that has traditionally helped students thrive in college.

Though their fate is yet undecided, Carmean believes that the real value in the MOOC phenomenon is what they have taught institutions about making online learning more effective.

“It takes a totally new pedagogy,” she said. “The traditional university doesn’t exist anymore in some ways.”

Grossman does believe that MOOCs will eventually be credited, however, at this point it is too early to say what that will look like. Getting around issues such as the ease of cheating or the difficulty of authenticating participants calls the validity of a completed course into question.

Currently, the American Council for Education is evaluating and recommending MOOCs for credit with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. It is, however, up to individual institutions whether or not they will take the recommendations.

Carmean predicts that once MOOCs are credited, their retention rates will stabilize, and the availability of low cost credits will turn students into “shoppers” able to save money by taking classes through a variety of venues.

Instead of taking a full course load at one just one university campus, students may take one or two courses at their home university, one at a community college, and a MOOC as well.
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The two biggest difficulties he has encountered is developing the course work to fit an online audience and the high dropout rate common to MOOCs.

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"You have to accept that your course won’t really work for everyone,” Grossman said.

MOOCs are in their developmental phase, and still not widely accepted in Higher education. Grossman explained that part of the problem is that MOOCs should not be compared to traditional courses. They are more like text books, in that, a textbook may be amazing but that does not mean students will not need a teacher’s help in order to understand the material.

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Get Higher

Educational systems in Russia and U.S.A.

by Lillie Mazitova

America vs. Russia, Russia vs. America. This competition has existed for years and has been translated to the educational system as well. Now, the situation has changed, but how much do Americans really know about education in Russia and vice versa? Back in the day, education in the USSR was divided between a small number of traditional universities and a larger number of narrow specialized institutes. The majority of higher education institutions were concentrated primarily in Moscow and Saint Petersburg. The reason behind such a system was simple: the government needed more workers and fewer highly educated people.

The United States of America is a country where education was developed in a tight connection with the historical and political events. Today, a post-secondary education in the United States is provided by either colleges or universities. Many students also choose to attend community colleges, which sometimes provide automatic admission to certain universities they are connected with. Russia’s educational system is currently undergoing many changes and those changes mainly concern the degree one might acquire. Before this new process, higher education was undertaken in a single stage. Now, basic higher education consists of two stages (see diagram).

Needless to say, access to higher education in Russia is extremely competitive. High school graduates must pass several centralized tests and internal university exams. Depending on the score the entrant receives, he can define which university he will be able to attend.

The most prestigious universities have the highest entrance scores. For example, Moscow State University modifies its entrance scores every year depending on the number of applicants and their exam results. That way the university can maintain its high standards in education.

Most high school graduates strive for scholarship funding because the cost of education is rising quickly. Those who don’t get scholarships have the option of paying for their education. Right now, a year in MSU will cost somewhere around 287,000 rubles (equivalent to $9,567). Just to compare: three years ago this number was 30,000 rubles less, which rounds to $840. Obviously, the better the university, the higher the tuition is going to be. Despite the increased cost, MSU’s potential students are quite lucky in that this university has the largest amount of government provided scholarships.

The admittance process in the United States is different. Universities accept students based on their G.P.A., class ranking, standardized test scores (similar to centralized tests in Russia), participation in extracurricular activities, interviews and much more. The majority of students do not pursue postgraduate degrees, instead preferring to head directly into workforce.

Two years ago, Russia started its move towards the Bologna process, which would bring radical changes to higher education. Even though the Bologna Declaration was signed in 2003, Russia started migrating from its traditional tertiary education model just recently. This shift has been heavily criticized by various sectors in Russia, and there is a serious reason for concern.

The policy makers in higher education simply split their five-year program into two halves without actually changing the curriculum. Because of that, many employers do not consider a bachelor’s degree to be a complete education. In a way, a bachelor’s degree became a way to satisfy the demand of the masses for higher education.

Andrey Fursenko, Russia’s Minister of Education & Sciences, does not agree with that perception. He presents a full education and I sincerely hope that one day we will be able to convince employers of that. The division of undergraduate and graduate programs allows people to choose their own educational strategy with more flexibility.

Sadly, employers still take those words with a grain of salt.

Defenders of the process claim that the last years of the specialist program are useless, and its partly a valid criticism as most students tend to work during their fourth and fifth years.

Higher education in the United States also has been undergoing significant changes in recent years. It started with President Obama’s goal to achieve the “highest proportion of college graduates in the world” by 2020. He stated: “We must address the urgent need to expand the promise of education in America. That is why we will provide the support necessary for [every student] to complete college.”

This goal can only be achieved by expanding access to free education. The fact is, most of the colleges and universities in America charge high tuition and financial aid has been on a steady decline over the past decade. In order to solve this problem, the government is working in several directions: they are raising the funding for scholarships, trying to lower the cost of education and giving students an easier access to educational loans.

No matter the positive changes, Russia’s higher education system is far from perfect. Some of the current burning issues are: non-recognized diplomas abroad, non-compatibility with European and American educational programs, rigidly-fixed curriculums during the whole education process, and funding reduction of scholarships.

Other contentious issues include absence of local and international mobility in universities, the university does not help students to obtain desirable internships, limited and/ or outdated technology, lack of social life opportunities on campuses, the legitimacy of centralized testing and therefore the admission process it creates, corruption in higher education institutions connected to admission and assessment.

Grigory Prutskov, Moscow State University professor of journalism, addresses those problems saying that “the new system is more progressive since it creates more opportunities for students.”

MSU’s Dr. Maria Lukina adds, “We need those changes to fit in with the international educational system.”

But there are advantages to Russia’s educational system, too. For the most part higher education is still free of charge, universities provide social security to non-resident students, the government pays students a living allowance throughout their studies, and during the last couple of years, students can combine studies and work.

Needless to say, America has one of the strongest educational systems to date. Some of the obvious pros are: a multilevel educational system, flexible study programs which give students the leverage to control their education, local and international mobility between different universities, strong technology, and a prosperous social life within university walls.

But as always, there are some disadvantages to the American system. Universities always require tuition, the cost of which can be demanding to meet, students have to pay for their accommodations themselves, burning reform curriculum, and admission is based on many subjective factors. Also, some students have a tough time landing the internship of their dreams.

As we can see, the two systems have much more in common than anyone would have guessed. They both face the same challenges and go through similar reform. And their pros cross-over occasionally as well.

Education

April 2013

What is it like being a student in the U.S.A. and Russia?

University of Washington Tacoma

“We have so many different types of programs going together. Having this broad range of classes to choose from is kind of awesome!”

– Ashley Cameron, 25

“The fact that they keep raising prices is annoying. Nobody can afford it these days, it’s kind of ridiculous. Everyone is getting out of here in massive debt.”

– Kelsey Pasci, 27

“I am a student, and I think I should have the right to pick which subjects I will need in the future. We have lectures where just two people are present. It’s a torture for both students and professors.”

– Alina Olyjina, 20

“...We have a lot of scholarships compared to America. And in our country you can lack money but still study in a nice university without getting any loans, just because you’re smart enough.”

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Russia's educational system is currently undergoing many similar changes, and those changes mainly concern the degree one might acquire. Before this new process, higher education was undertaken in a single stage. Now, basic higher education consists of two stages (see diagram):

Needless to say, access to higher education in Russia is extremely competitive. Higher schools must pass several centralized tests and internal university exams. Depending on the score the entrant receives, he can define which university he will be able to attend.

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No matter the positive changes, Russia's higher education system is far from perfect. Some of the current problems are: transformed curriculum in bachelor's and master's programs, non-recognition of diplomas abroad, non-compatibility with European and American educational programs, rigidly-fixed curricula during the whole education process, and funding reduction of scholarships.

Other contentious issues include absence of local and international mobility in universities, the university does not help students to obtain desirable internships, limited and/or outdated technology, lack of social life opportunities on campuses, the legitimacy of centralized testing and therefore the admission process it creates, corruption in higher education institutions connected to admission and assessment.

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As we can see, the two systems have much more in common than anyone would have guessed. They both face the same challenges and go through similar reforms. And their pros cross-over occasionally as well.
A comparison between American and Russian expat life

by Sofia Dzyuba

Some people would describe their home as their country of origin. There are others, however, who would disagree. To them, “home” may be where their partner is, or their apartment, or simply their belongings. These people are mobile; they define the entire world as their “Motherland,” and feel at home in many places. Another word to describe them is “cosmopolitan.” I was able to speak to several of these cosmopolitans, both Russian and American expatriates, and learn their stories of how fate brought each of them to the other side of the world.

American Expats

Kara Bollinger, 25

Kara Bollinger, 25, Assistant Director of the Writing & Communication Center at the New Economic School in Moscow, is from a small town in the midwest and finds Russian food delicious. “Zaphikanka, syrniki, and bliny are some of the best comfort foods I’ve ever known.”

For the majority of American expats, life in Russia seems exotic and the reasons why they decided to move to Russia are various and impressive.

For Andrew Roth, 25, a reporter for the Moscow bureau of the New York Times, his decision to change his New York lifestyle was all a bit of an accident.

“I chose the language for the sound, the harsh and soft qualities all together. I studied abroad in Moscow and St. Petersburg, then interned here for the New York Times in 2009, and after that summer believed I wouldn’t come back. I thought of moving to Turkey or the Middle East, and almost took a programming job in Wisconsin. But it’s very hard to get out, and when a friend let me know a news outlet here was hiring, I packed my bags for Moscow once more.”

Meanwhile, Bollinger’s choice of Russia was more or less conscious. Professionally, a position that was offered to her as a writing center administrator was exactly what she wanted after completing her Master’s degree and helping to start the first writing center in Russia was an appealing prospect. Personally, moving to Moscow sounded like a great adventure for a young person and she couldn’t turn it down.

Yuval Weber, 31

Yuval Weber, 31, a Ph.D. candidate at University of Texas at Austin and Visiting Research Fellow and Professor of New Economic School in Russia, first went to Moscow to conduct research for his dissertation in political science and was surprised at the importance of personal relationships in Russia.

“In the U.S., it’s much more common to conduct business through email and/or social media with someone you’ve never met. In Russia, it’s on the phone or in person. So I found myself meeting people much more frequently than in the U.S.”

Conventional wisdom says that in Russia people are talkative. They enjoy arguing about politics and offering their predictions about the future of virtually every aspect of public life. Bollinger gives a positive example of this Russian characteristic:

“Many of the Russian people I know have amazing stories. They can tell me about what it was like in the early 1990s when the USSR collapsed. Those are stories I’d never get to hear without moving here.”

Roth gives another example of the qualities he admires in Russians:

“Their openness and willingness to accept others is a characteristic:”

Gurgov likes the feeling of freedom and the great service Americans might believe that all Russians are alcoholics and drink Vodka all day long. While stereotypes can contain a grain of truth, most are simply caricatures of one group of people.

Debelov defines this stereotype:

“People have assumptions about how you should behave and dress based on where you are from - I don’t only break them, I create new ones.”

On the other side of the world, the Russian expats living in America also notice things that many Americans take for granted.

Vlad Gurgov, 27

Vlad Gurgov, 27, originally from Moscow and now living in San Francisco, moved to the United States because of better job opportunities. He founded the startup company Vi rode in the Silicon Valley with his friend, Alexander Deb elov, 25, from the southern Russian city of Rostov.

Debelov moved to America much earlier than Gurgov. At age 13, he attended Eagle Brook School (a boarding school) in Western Massachusetts. With his entire family still residing in Rostov, Deb elov has spent the last 12 years finishing middle school, high school, and college in America.

Viktoria Miranovich, 29

Viktoria Miranovich, 29, a public relations specialist from Moscow, appreciates the ease of doing business in America in comparison to Russia.

“[It] is much easier to do business here in a sense that putting the same amount of effort, energy, and resources in Russia, in comparison to the USA, will never bring me to the level I achieved in America.”

Each country has its own stereotypes. A popular one about America that Gurgov identified is that all Americans are fat and are clueless about other countries, whereas many Americans might believe that all Russians are alcoholics and drink Vodka all day long. While stereotypes can contain a grain of truth, most are simply caricatures of one group of people.

Gurgov likes the feeling of freedom and the great service everywhere in the United States, but sometimes feels that Russians are more open, and he misses that openness here. Deb elov agrees. He also likes that most cities are technologically integrated.

“I can pay for my apartment, electricity, phone, taxes, etc. all through my laptop.”

For some, embracing cultural differences is a difficult task. But this desire is what distinguishes the cosmopolitan, not only in Russia and the United States, but everywhere in the world.
**Expat Life**

*An A comparison between American and Russian expat life*

**by Sofia Dzyuba**

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Debelov defies this stereotype.

“People have assumptions about how you should behave and dress based on where you are from – I don’t only break them, I create new ones.”

At his college, he was empowered to believe that he could start a company and make millions of dollars while he was young, without much startup capital or anything to do it, just a desire. He was exposed to young entrepreneurs who had been successful and were even younger than he. Having this experience made him believe that he could do the same.

“In Russia, most of my peers believe that starting a business is a corrupt, capital-intensive and bureaucratic process. People are skeptical of others’ success and will typically make up hundreds of excuses rather than do it. In the U.S., I was surrounded by people who thought differently.”

Miranovich has chosen a different route to learning about the country. She considers herself an open-minded person, and rather than believe the stereotypes about the United States, she decided that the best way to learn about it was by reading and researching as much as possible. When she arrived, she discovered that her research “100 percent correlates with reality.”

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For some, embracing cultural differences is a difficult task. But this desire is what distinguishes the cosmopolitan, not only in Russia and the United States, but everywhere in the world.
MSU/UWT Celebrates 10 Years

What started as a one-time only excursion has turned into a decade-long partnership. Here, past student staff members of The Journalist talk about what the experience meant to them.

“Karie Houghton and I were the first UWT students to go over to MSU, and it was certainly a scary time in the world. Actually, the day that we got on the plane to head over was the same day that former president Bush declared war on Iraq. I remember being scared, but feeling this sense of purpose and the once-in-a-lifetime experience was overwhelming.” - Tolena Thornburn, Senior Communication Manager for Wizards of the Coast

“I could see how media works in another country and got the experience that helped me to reach a new professional level. And, I have to thank everybody who took a part in the program and especially our academic moms Chris Demaske and Maria Lukina.” - Artem Galustyan, Editor with Kommersant Online

“For me, this project was symbolic because we had been producing the magazine during the first round of U.S.-Russia "reset." And, it was our modest "reset." As a matter of fact, it was a grassroots reset launched not by politicians, but by students and professors.” - Pavel Koulikov, PhD MSU student

“I dreamt about a trip to the United States since my childhood. It was more than just visiting a new country—it was a great experience of working on a bilingual team. I understood how useful it was for me when I became a bilingual team. I understood how useful it was for me when I became a bilingual team.” - Pavel Koulikov, PhD MSU student

“I worked with Russian colleagues gave me a great new perspective on how journalism works worldwide, but the program was also a lot of fun. We learned to work together in the newsroom so we could create a product we were all proud of on deadline. More than that, though, I remember visiting the Russian students’ homes, meeting their families and getting to see Russia through their eyes.” - Marisa Petr-ish, former KOMO Communities Reporter

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“The most memorable experience was simply how welcoming and warm the MSU team was. They went out of their way to make us comfortable in an unfamiliar place. I also remember noticing the difference in Russian news coverage compared to home.” - Karie Houghton, Mother of two little boys

“The most memorable experience of the project is the Cinco de Mayo party that my parents hosted. The objective of the game is for two players to virtually box one another and the first one to knock out their opponent wins. The best part of the game was when Maria Lukina and her husband played. For probably the first time ever in Wii boxing history, Maria and her husband knocked each other out simultaneously. Instead of aggressively trying to get their players back to their feet to continue the match, they dropped their controllers and embraced each other in celebration.” - Kimberly Wynne, Verizon Wireless Leadership Program

“The project challenged my copy editing abilities like nothing else. I learned how to read closely and work with writers to forensically suss out what they were trying to say when the text wasn’t saying it for them. It’s a skill I continue to use every day.” - Daniel Nash, a reporter in Bonney Lake, Courier-Herald

“Participating in the program helped me learn how far I can push myself in a high pressure situation. I felt like I literally did not sleep for 10 days.” - Kelsey Pasero, Ad Creation Manager for Datasphere Technologies

“How could I forget a late-night karaoke duet of the Scorpion’s “Winds of Change?” Or watching Eastern European folk dancing at the legendary Bolshoi Theater? Or Professor Demaske’s friend, who shared with us an unbelievable amount of insider knowledge on Russian culture? Or when Russian parents prepared for us one of the most amazing meals I’ve ever had?” - Nick Prybycie, Freelance journalist, Chicago Tribune senior copywriter

“I remember Professor Demaske telling me after reading one of the stories I did for our project, “Ira, you should work as a reporter writing in English, you can do it.” Four years later, I brought my stories from the project to the job interview with my current editor-in-chief.” - Irina Filatova, Business reporter, The Moscow Times

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“In a short amount of time, I learned how to handle the pressures of a last minute tasking and changes in ideas and directions of a publication. I also learned that there is such a thing as controlled chaos. Russia will forever be an experience I tell people about, a trip that helped open doors to my future career.” - Chelsi Spence, Public Affairs Officer in the Air Force

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American & Russian Companies: Rethinking Priorities

The world’s most innovative companies take ever greater care of their employees. Russia is behind the times

by Maria Eremina

Fast Company Magazine recently published the list of “The Most Innovative Companies of 2013.” There were many criteria that helped these companies make the covered list, but which of them valued personal and family time for their employees? Our list narrows down “The Most Innovative” to “The Most Innovative and Family-Friendly.”

The philosophy of companies in the future is reflected best in Google’s Benefits Program: “Our priority is to offer a customizable program that can be tailored to the specific needs of each individual, whether they enjoy ice climbing in Alaska, want to retire by age 40, or plan to adopt three children.”

Have Russian high-tech companies followed Google’s example? The staff at The Journalist compared Russian employers with American ones using three key indicators – flexible work options, family focus and health care.

Intel is recognized as one of the best companies for working mothers, according to Working Mothers Magazine, providing flexible job rotations and telecommuting opportunities. The company offers creative approaches from compressed workweeks and flextime to alternate start times for part-time and job share positions. Twenty-five percent of the staff has chosen a compressed workweek. At least 75 percent of the employees sometimes work remotely. According to spokespersons for Apple, like Intel, they allow their employees to work away from the office. Protection of family values and support for large families and for parents of adopted children are Apple’s most important social priorities. It is possible to work from home as an Apple expert. Apple calls this position a home-based agent (HBA). Similar flexible working schedules are found at IBM and Nike.

In speaking with their representatives, we found that for Russian corporations, few innovative social programs like the ones found in the American list exist – yet. For example, Evroset, Rosnano, Mail.ru, MDM Bank, and Turkcell, Russian companies all comparable in size, salary, and industry to companies such as Intel and Apple, do not offer flextime at all.

All is not hopeless for Russian companies, though. At Yandex and NooLab, employees can apply for flexible work, but flextime should be understood as simply alternate starting or finishing times for the work day. For example, for working mothers, Ekaterina Prokhorova, HR director at IBS, proposes shifting schedules in order to allow them to drive their children to school.

“Individually, our company meets the needs of a young mother and gives her a chance to work according to [a] special schedule. Usually it is a question of changing the start or end of her working day.”

Nastaya Savina, the vice-president of corporate communications for ABBYY, says, “Flextime exists for those employees whose duties are not connected with our clients. They could start their day whenever they want.”

Part-time jobs are also possible at ABBYY.

American companies not only create flexible work options for their employees, but are also trying to adjust to their family needs. For example, Nike let a young father work on an individual schedule for three months after he became a parent. Google offers paid maternity leave for women who have worked for the company for over a year.

Now, consider the difference when looking at Russian companies. Svetlana Kuznetsova, director of corporate communications at Rosnano, tells us that they give an employee one extra leave day to bring her child home from a maternity hospital. In the case of a child’s birth, most Russian companies pay their employees 13,087 rubles ($436), the sum fixed by the government for the current year, adding nothing to it.

For many American companies, health insurance covers the cost of childbirth. This was of great importance for Natasha, a Microsoft employee, who moved from a Russian company’s department to an American one.

“The delivery cost me $11,000. I can’t imagine what would have happened if I didn’t have insurance.”

Recently, Intel has introduced state-of-the-art nursing rooms after employee feedback revealed a need for more space and privacy for nursing mothers. These rooms include special stalls equipped with comfortable chairs and adequate storage space for breast pumps.

“Employees also brought to our attention the need to set up a schedule where there aren’t 16 people in the room at the same time. So, we’ve really worked hard to make these rooms comfortable for the mothers,” said Lori Wilson, one of the women’s initiative managers at Intel. For all new parents, Intel offers a formal re-integration program at the conclusion of a person’s maternity or paternity leave.

Another trend of innovative American companies is creating corporate child care facilities for those parents who have no one to leave their children with. For instance, Google has 10 rooms for children which are situated near its offices. Google’s children’s centers are free of charge and available for kids aged 3 months to 5 years.

Unlike American companies, Russian ones rarely spend money on the children of their employees and do little in excess of the legal limits of the system. Yandex, Mail.ru, ABBYY, Rambler, MDM Bank, and Evroset do not propose any additional benefits for maternity leave.

“When my child was born, I received around 13,000 rubles,” says an employee of MDM Bank, describing a typical situation of the Russian experience. There are some exceptions, though. For female employees who have been working for IBS more than three years, the company gives a cash benefit amounting to 50,000 rubles ($1,666).

What do Russian companies offer their employees?

Traditionally, New Year’s holidays enjoy wide popularity. “Every year we are making New Year’s parties for employees’ children. There are a lot of funny games and arts,” says Alena Vladimirkayaz, Director of Recruitment for Mail.ru. Free or price-reduced travel to summer camps is another bonus.

It doesn’t look as if Russian companies will press towards becoming modeled after those in “The Most Innovative Companies” list. In the estimation of Sergey Guriev, head of the New Economic School, Moscow, the value of the life of a Russian citizen is four times less than that of a citizen in democratically developed countries.

No wonder Russian companies, like their employees, are preoccupied with a question of survival. They are not ready to say, as Google does, “We realize and celebrate that our employees have diverse needs, and that this diversity brings flexible and individually dereccted support.”

TOP 10 MOST INNOVATIVE COMPANIES

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<th>Rate</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Nike</td>
<td>for a pair of revolutionary new products and a culture of true believers</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Amazon</td>
<td>for speeding up the delivery of change</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Splunk</td>
<td>for spreading the mobile payments revolution</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>StumbleUpon</td>
<td>for bringing big data to the masses</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>eBay</td>
<td>for evolving into the destination for design wares</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>T-Mobile</td>
<td>for being the epitome of the data-driven disruptive startup</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Security First</td>
<td>for sticking it to anyone selling fraudulent goods</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Pinterest</td>
<td>for unlocking our image obsession</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>for bridging a health care gap with telecon</td>
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<td>10</td>
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American & Russian Companies: Rethinking Priorities

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Now, consider the difference when looking at Russian companies. Svetlana Kuznetsova, director of corporate communications at Rosnano, tells us that they give an employee one extra leave day to bring his wife home from a maternity hospital. In the case of a child’s birth, most Russian companies pay their employees $1,087 rubles ($43), the sum fixed by the government for the current year, adding nothing to it. For many American companies, health insurance covers the cost of childbirth. This was of great importance for Natalia, a Microsoft employee, who moved from a Russian company’s department to an American one.

“When my child was born, I received around 13,000 rubles,” says an employee of MDM Bank, describing a typical situation of the Russian experience.

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What do Russian companies offer their employees? Traditionally, New Year’s holidays enjoy wide popularity: “Every year we are making New Year’s parties for employees’ children. There are a lot of games and arts,” says Alena Vladimirskaya, Director of Recruitment for Mail.ru. Free or price-reduced summer camps are another bonus. It doesn’t look as if Russian companies will press towards becoming modeled after those in “The Most Innovative Companies” list. In the estimation of Sergey Guriev, head of the New Economic School, Moscow, the value of the life of a Russian citizen is four times less than that of a citizen in democratically developed countries.

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My Roman Holiday

An American's multicultural experience in Rome

by Margaret Lundberg

It was raining. Buckets. Splashing our way through cobblestoned puddles, dodging umbrellas and the tents of the market-filled piazzas, and tugging our suitcases along behind us, we heard his voice for the first time. Looking to see who was speaking to us—in English—we saw Antonio's smiling face. Standing in the middle of the square, he was waiving and gesturing, as if the whole of the city was his personal audience. The official face of the establishment. He was the "draw," so to speak, and over the years, he had managed to get it for 72 euros, and he promised us that Roman society was historically homogenous, but also about the ways that Romans hang out. Nonetheless, “Just a glass of wine?...” “Ah, you are just in time! You must taste this! You must try this!...” “Another day, then?...” “Yes! Maybe another day then.” “Ah, beautiful ladies, you are back!” “You will eat somewhere. Why not here?” “One day, “ we promised again and again. “Soon!” “Soon!” And that would identify us as American, it was our enjoyment of each other’s company.

The Journalist

April 2013

Culture

April 2013

Culture

A bit over a month ago, I took my first trip to Rome—a 10-day “mini” study abroad with students from all of the University of Washington. The purpose of the trip was to discover Rome’s multicultural history. Through sightseeing jaunts every morning, and late-afternoon classes we learned about Rome’s past, and during our free time in between we learned about its present. Our professor spoke to us not only about the history and architecture of ancient Rome (1 can now identify three types of columns and an assortment of architectural styles at 50 yards), but also about the ways that Roman society was historically structured as a multicultural society.

In the midst of our first class session, just before the jet lag overtook us and the members of our group dropped off to sleep on the tabletops, one-by-one, I recall a comment our professor made about the way that Italians would know us as Americans. “It's not because you speak English,” he assured us. “They know you are American because you are a multicultural group. In Italy, people of different cultures do not hang out together. It was our language that would identify us as American. It was our enjoyment of each other’s company.

Every day—sometimes several times a day—we would pass Antonio in his post at the front door of his outdoor restaurant, and every time he would call out to us as we passed, reminding us of our promise to eat a meal at his restaurant. “Another day, then?”

“Just a glass of wine?”

“Ah, you are just in time! You must taste this! You must try this!”

“Another day, then?”

“Ah, beautiful ladies, you are back!”

“Maybe you will have a cappuccino here today?”

Day by day, Antonio continued to ply us with conversation and his appealing smile. Yet day by day, we resisted. We were urged to avoid the places where the “tourists” ate, to find the “real” Rome instead—those places where the locals hang out. It will be better, we heard.

“One day,” we promised again and again. “Soon!”

Just between ourselves, we teasingly agreed we would likely succumb to his invitation eventually and try the place out—only to see Antonio smile.

Ambling through the narrow, cobbled streets of Rome, we found street markets and merchants everywhere. One brilliantly sunny day—we were constantly besieged by street merchants selling fake designer bags, some bizarre toy that made a noise like seagulls, spray paint art (created with an almost dance-like process fascinating to watch), or any number of small souvenirs items. Many of these street merchants, later discovered, were immigrants just trying to make a living at the only jobs they could find. One day, Antonio’s engaging smile and banter finally won out and we stepped into a tiny shop near the Piazza Navona. We had a fantastic meal, a bottle of wine, and learned a bit of Antonio’s personal history. Antonio was a somewhat recent immigrant to Italy. Born in Tunisia, he speaks five languages, has a degree in tourism, and is now living in Rome with his brother while the rest of his family is still in Tunisia.

He told us of his past and his present, but we didn’t say it directly, we got the impression that he believed it was only due to his language skills that he got the restaurant job—one of several jobs that he works to make a living.

A day-trip to Florence where I had hoped to meet Michelangelo’s David, brought instead a different encounter, one that offered me a glimpse of what many Italians think of the immigrants in their country. My classmate Amy had just purchased a beautiful leather messenger bag—a gift for her husband—in one of the stalls of the celebrated Florence leather market. Eager to try her bargaining skills, she had managed to get it for 72 euros, and she was elated.

As we worked our way back through the market, she paused to look out a moment at a similar bag hanging on the side of another stall. The merchant, detecting a potential sale, swooped in and said, “I will sell this to you for 60 euros!” Panicked that she had just been “taken,” Amy looked at me for confirmation that she hadn’t made a mistake in her purchase—and at this point her experience began to unspool rapidly.

The merchant grabbed the bag, barked “Follow me!” and we (for some unknown reason) dutifully trailed behind. For the next few moments, in his shop behind the stall, the man showed us all the good points of his bag compared to the “bad” points of the bag Amy had just bought. However, it was his distrubie that followed that was the real lesson.

“You Americans only want to know the price. You don’t care about the quality! You buy this bag and you only get bad people, and by buying from them, you are supporting bad people, and by buying from them, you are supporting the bad foreigners.” Amy had purchased the bag from (likely Bangladeshis) were bad people, and by buying from them, we had hurt the “real” Italians. It didn’t matter that he was living in the country where they contribute so much, didn’t matter that he was living—many Italians were not happy about his family is still in Tunisia.

“It wasn’t our language that would identify us as American, it was our enjoyment of each other’s company.”

Margaret Lundberg (third from the left)

Photo by Margaret Lundberg
My Roman Holiday

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“Ah, you are just in time! You must come in and eat. Our food is excellent. You will like it very much.”

“Just a glass of wine? No! Maybe another day then?”

At that moment, all of our thoughts involved nothing more than getting our jet-lagged selves and our hangovers inside of the Roman rain. Nonetheless, appreciating the sound of our own language and his charming smile, we promised him—and ourselves—that we would go back to eat at his restaurant.

“Your food is excellent. You will like it here.”

During my time in Rome, I saw places that I had dreamed of seeing all my life—my literal birthright. I got my first glimpses of the Pantheon and the Sistine Chapel. I walked through the Roman forum, gazing at columns that had been standing on that site for dozens of centuries. I actually touched one of Michelangelo's sculptures at the Basilica di Santa Maria Sopra Minerva. I walked through the docks of Rome, marveling at the selection of scarves at great prices. But wherever we went, we were constantly besieged by street merchants selling fake designer bags, some bizarre toy that made a noise like seagulls, spray paint art (created with an almost dance-like process fascinating to watch), or any number of small souvenir items. Many of these street merchants, later discovered, were immigrants just trying to make a living at the only jobs they could find. There are a multicultural group. In Italy, people of different cultures do not hang out together. “It wasn’t our language that would identify us as Americans, it was our enjoyment of each other’s company.”

“One day, Antonio’s engaging smile and banter finally won out and we stepped into the restaurant. We had a fantastic meal, a bottle of wine, and learned a bit of Antonio’s personal history. Antonio was a somewhat recent immigrant to Italy. Born in Tunisia, he speaks five languages, has a degree in tourism, and is now living in Rome with his brother while the rest of his family is still in Tunisia. He told our group that although he loved Rome—“It is my home away from home”—many Italians were not happy with him living there. Although he didn’t say it directly, we got the impression that he believed it was only due to his language skills that he got the restaurant job—one of several jobs that he works to make a living. A day-trip to Florence where I had hoped to meet Michelangelo’s David, brought instead a different encounter, one that offered me a glimpse of what many Italians think of the immigrants in their country. My classmate Amy had just purchased a beautiful leather messenger bag—a gift for her husband—in one of the stalls of the celebrated Florence leather market. Eager to try her bargaining skills, she had managed to get it for 72 euros, and she was elated.

As we worked our way back through the market, she paused to look out for a moment at a similar bag hanging on the side of another stall. The merchant, sensing a potential sale, swooped in and said, “I will sell this to you for 60 euros!” Panicked that she had just been “taken,” Amy looked at me for confirmation that she hadn’t made a mistake in her purchase—and at this point her experience began to unspool rapidly.

The merchant grabbed the bag, barked “Follow me!” and we (for some still unknown reason) dutifully trailed behind. For the next few moments, in his shop behind the stall, the man showed us the good points of his bag compared to the “bad” points of the bag Amy had just bought. However, it was his dextrise that followed that was the real lesson.

“You Americans only want to know the price. You pay for the quality! You buy this bag and you only get bad people.”

His point, which he stated repeatedly and vociferously, was that the “foreigners” Amy had purchased the bag from (likely Bangladeshis) were bad people, and by buying from them, we had hurt the “real” Italians. It didn’t matter that he was an immigrant struggling to make a life in a country where they contribute so much, but feel so unwelcome.
Photographing Tacoma

by Kylie Lanthorn & Ashley Cameron

When most students picture the perfect spring break, it consists of beaches, bikinis, and peach bellinis. We’re the overachieving students who chose to go a different route. During the week of spring break, we had the opportunity to assist on a Tacoma community project through the University of Washington Tacoma (UWT).

We were honored to spend our much needed academic break with skilled photographer Dawoud Bey, Columbia College Chicago’s Fine Arts professor and world renowned photographer.

So, what was it like to work for an artist of such renown? While sometimes challenging, it was a pretty funny, friendly man who knew precisely what he was doing. Bey is an old school photographer. He utilizes Polaroid cameras in an attempt to see, roughly, what the finished product will look like before he utilizes Polaroid cameras in an attempt to see, roughly, what the finished product will look like before the actual photograph is made. He asked subjects to “come and participate in a photo shoot?” John McClane (Bruce Willis) isn’t a very caring father but when he finds out his son is in danger in wild Russia, he becomes a Rescue Ranger. He travels there to protect his grown-up son, Jack. But once he arrives, he discovers that Jack works for the CIA and has a mission to prevent a nuclear weapons heist. After John shows up, everything turns into ruins. Moscow is no exception.

Residents Evil Retribution (2012)

Alice fights against the Umbrella Corporation and the undead, and, of course, Moscow is only one side of it. It is always interesting after watching films to go see the locations where they were shot, so you can become kind of the hero of your favorite place. But, in the case of Moscow, viewers always see a city that is covered in snow and full of bad guys.

Ethan Hunt’s organization is accused of orchestrating the bombing of the Kremlin. To prove his loyalty, Ethan decides to do anything he can to protect their reputation, even going to Moscow. American actor Tom Cruise and Russian actor Vladimir Mashkov are the stars of the film. The best quote of the movie is: “Our media is no more truthful than your’s, Americans.”

Iron Man 2 (2010)

During a live television appearance, Tony Stark (Robert Downey Jr.) takes off his Iron Man costume to audiences across the globe, including those in Moscow. To let us know that Russian viewers also saw the unveiling of Iron Man, audiences of the film are shown a quick glimpse of The Russian White House.

A Good Day To Die Hard (2013)

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A FedEx executive played by Tom Hanks is a hard worker. Nothing can stop him, not even the Russian winter. In one scene we see a postman in a symbolic Russian hat, known as an ushanka, singing lines from the famous opera Eugene Onegin. He hands the package to a boy who runs through the Red Square on his way to deliver the box to Hanks. Police Academy: Mission to Moscow (1994)
The new Russian government can’t deal with the Mafia alone. They desperately ask for help and the Police Academy is happy to oblige. This was one of the first American-produced comedy films really, legally, had an approval to film in Russia. The film features scenes involving the Bolshoi Theatre and Red Square. Production was temporarily halted due to the October 1993 constitutional crisis.

Red Heat (1988)

This movie is loved by Russians because of its mistakes and clichés. Arnold Schwarzenegger, with a Terminator’s face, plays a Russian policeman who has to deal with an arrogant Chicago police detective to capture a Go-Go dancer drug lord.

There are two versions of how the movie was allowed to be filmed in Russia. First, the Western film company got the permission to shoot the movie in the Red square. Second, the company daily拍摄social permission, so they made it quickly and underground. Guess which one is the truth?

It is always interesting after watching films to go see the locations where they were shot, so you can become kind of the hero of your favorite place. But, in the case of Moscow, viewers always see a city that is covered in snow and full of bad guys.

All cities have their images in films. London for historical movies. Paris for romantic. Maybe there is nothing terribly wrong with the current images of Moscow, but for those of us who live in the city and love it, our city has so much more beauty than just snow. It seems, to me at least, a waste to show only one side of it.
An in-depth look at being an assistant to Dawoud Bey

by Kyle Lanthorn & Ashley Cameron

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Bey is an old school photographer. He utilizes Polaroid cameras in an attempt to see, roughly, what the finished product will look like before taking photographs on film. Yet, Bey lives very much in the present, taking photographs on film. Yet, Bey utilizes Polaroid cameras in an attempt to see, roughly, what the finished product will look like before taking photographs on film.

One of the most interesting aspects of watching him work was the process itself. Each photo shoot consisted of a pair of people meant to represent the community of Tacoma. There were two requirements to be a subject in a photograph: you had to be from Tacoma (or strongly tied to the area) and you couldn’t know the person you were paired with. Many pairs were scheduled beforehand during a reception his first day in Tacoma, but some of the most interesting photos were of impromptu pairs.

When there was a gap in the schedule or someone wasn’t already paired, Bey would literally have us pull strangers off the street to come participate. It was quite humorous to walk up to random people and ask, “Hi, would you like to participate in a photo shoot?”

These spontaneous pairings, where Bey said he was “improvising,” were often charged with the most chemistry and produced the most diverse looking couplings. He asked subjects to “come as they are,” not wanting people to dress-up or act differently, so by randomly pulling people from their daily lives, we were able to capture their real personality.

Bey’s photographs of the Tacoma community are meant to capture the spirit and diversity of the city. Interesting pairings included couples such as an 8-year-old boy paired with an adult UWT student, a youthful lyrical slouched over next to a silver-haired businessman, and a high school art student with the mayor of Tacoma.

It was enlightening seeing people of all walks of life being brought together to remind us we are all part of the same community.

UWT is based in the middle of Downtown Tacoma, making it a community-oriented, urban campus. The goal of this photography project is to further strengthen the relationship between the university and the City of Tacoma by displaying the university’s dedication to art and community.

The new art hanging in the Powerhouse building on campus will entice the community into the university as a family would invite its members into their home to view a family portrait.

We, especially as assistants to the project, are highly looking forward to seeing the finished work on display knowing we had such an important role in the production of this permanent installation.

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The Bourne Supremacy (2004)

Jason Bourne (Matt Damon) visits not only the center of Moscow but the outskirts as well. It’s the first time when Otradnoje (one of the distant Moscow’s districts) is a movie location. Now, American audiences can see where the ordinary Muscovites live.

Cast Away (2000)

A FedEx executive played by Tom Hanks is a hard worker. Nothing can stop him, not even the Russian winter. In one scene we see a postman in a symbolic Russian hat, known as an ushanka, singing lines from the famous opera Eugene Onegin. He hands the package to a boy who runs through the Red Square on his way to deliver the box to Hanks.

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In the inconvenient rain and chill of the northwest, the outdoors are nestled in a climate-controlled indoors to stave off the adventurer's appetite in anticipation of sunnier days.

At Edgeworks Climbing in Tacoma, the rock walls are littered with the young and old, families and college kids, men and women. The gym has teamed up with the University of Washington Tacoma to offer students free all day passes as well as free equipment rentals, and works with other colleges and universities in the greater Tacoma area as well.

In addition to rock climbing options, Edgeworks offers fitness classes such as Pilates, yoga, cycling and boot camps. There are also those who go there specifically to climb and then decide that they would like to include some other aspects in their workout.

Patrick McCabe, 30, sales manager and cycling and Pilates instructor at Edgeworks, works hard to incorporate functional movement into his classes and puts a lot of emphasis on translating fitness to the needs of daily life.

"This is a new form of movement for a lot of people—using the body in a functional aspect. None of our classes are weird and random or don't really fit with anything else."

The folks at Edgeworks are active and excited about their hobbies that they have managed to make their work. They try to inspire that same passion in the community.

They want to create that 'third space'—a destination that gets people outside of their homes but still has a living room feel. Upstairs in their gym, along with their fitness classrooms, they have an open space accented with tables and cushy chairs.

Overlooking the climbing area there is workspace lining the railing, perfectly sized for the laptops of students wanting to take advantage of the free Wi-Fi to work on homework—perhaps taking a study break to tackle a climbing route.

"People come here primarily for the climbing but almost right behind that is that social aspect," says McCabe.

The opportunity to take the sport outdoors is vast, as they offer a variety of guided climbs, for beginning climbers to the advanced, and they have various outdoor courses to teach safety and technique.

They are currently setting up an outdoor trip to Vantage through UW Bothell, and they offer lots of outdoor guided trips throughout the year.

"The climbs are set up just like in the gym. Out in nature, we are able to climb things a lot of people never knew existed," said McCabe.

Though there is no replacement for the great outdoors, Edgeworks is a more than adequate substitute to prepare climbers to take on the real deal when they are ready, or to keep climbing enthusiasts conditioned and practiced on days when the unpredictable weather keeps them off the mountains.

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**WHERE TO LIVE?**

*The Journalist* presents the cost of eight items a student might need in cities throughout the U.S. and Russia

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*All prices are in U.S. dollars*

*Infographic by Yana Andriesh*