

Gen. Wesley Clark praises the work of KAEF:

An event by American Councils for International Education, in New York, emphasizes the role of

On May 4, the American Councils for International Education hosted an event titled "Creating a New Kosova through Education" at Battery Gardens in New York City to support the Kosovo America Education Fund's (KAEF) efforts to provide graduate education for Kosova's best and brightest.

The night's program, led by host committee member, Gazmend Gjonbalaj, emphasized the role of higher education in post-conflict countries generally, and KAEF as a specific example. KAEF was honored to host guests from Kosova including Consulate General, Mr. Ylber Kryeziu, and representatives from the Kosova Ministry of Diaspora, Director for Culture and Education Avdyll Lipoveci and Senior Advisor Kushtirim Sheremeti.

Wesley K. Clark, retired U.S. Army general, former Democratic presidential candidate and longtime supporter of the Kosovar people, delivered a keynote address stressing the importance of education for economic development and sustainable change in Kosova. He praised the KAEF program, calling it the best investment that has been made in Kosova's future because it inspires Kosova's emerging leaders to work towards transforming their country. "The role of the Kosovo American Education Fund in providing scholarships to young Kosovars in some of America's finest graduate schools is one of the pillars upon which the future of Kosova depends," said General Clark. He encouraged all KAEF supporters to keep working hard to "make Kosova a bright shining star."

Amy Manning of McGuireWoods LLP was awarded the inaugural David Gotaas Community Supporter Award. The award honors an individual or organization that has demonstrated leadership in fundraising, fellow support (for example, through internship opportunities or mentoring) or program enhancement for KAEF.

The award is named for Gotaas, a member of American Councils' Board of Trustees for six years and champion of KAEF, who passed away in May 2015 at age 64. Gotaas attended fellow graduation ceremonies, traveled throughout Kosova and made significant financial contributions to KAEF. Gotaas believed in KAEF's potential to make a dif-

ference for Kosova's future. Members of Gotaas's family were on hand to present the award.

Ms. Manning and her firm, McGuireWoods LLP, were selected to receive the David Gotaas Community Supporter award for providing an internship for Arben Limani, during his fellowship at Chicago-Kent College of Law, and hosting a trade event with Kosova's former president, H.E. Atifete Jahjaga, in November 2015.

Manning remarked after receiving the award, "During the event with President Jahjaga, she shared the inspiring and memorable quote: 'Americans should love America.' I have repeated it to many people - including my children. What a wonderful chance to see my country through the appreciative eyes of others!"

Event attendees also had the opportunity to hear from a current KAEF fellow, Fjolla Kondiroli (Cornell '17), who shared her KAEF experience and her plans both for her professional future and for Kosova. In addition, American Councils' president, Dan Davidson, Ph.D., told attendees about the 40 universities that have hosted the 80 KAEF Fellows to date, including Brandeis University, Harvard University, Georgetown University, and Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey-Newark. He also celebrated the success of the 69 alumni who now serve in leadership positions in government, business and media in Kosova.

The event raised more than

\$50,000 for KAEF fellowships. These funds will enable KAEF to continue its aim to help rebuild Kosova through graduate education.

TRANSCRIPT FROM THE SPEECH OF GEN. WESLEY K CLARK (RET.) AT THE EVENT

Whenever I get together, with members of Albanian-American community, I am always so overwhelmed by this sense of family, of commitment to each other, of patriotism for both Kosova and America. It's so evident. You just make me feel so good. I think that you are such a great group.

I congratulate you for your support for the Kosovo American Education Foundation, it's wonderful. Thank you for what you are doing for Kosova.

Now, I was in Kosova in 2012 and I met a number of these scholars who had come back. I have never seen a more effective study-abroad-program than I saw under Kosovo American Education Foundation.

I talked to them. They come back; they bring ideas; they bring engagement. They bring relative connections. They make it come together. And they are working with each other. One, two, for each year. Passing it on. Staying in touch. This is a very powerful force inside Kosova for the modernization and the bonding of Kosova with the world community and frankly, I think, with the United States.

So, I am really in awe of what you have done, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to come here, because I really do believe in this program. It is a great program. I have recommended it to several other national leaders,



Gen. Wesley K. Clark, Gena Morina-Bajrami and Vehbi Bajrami, publisher of Illyria newspaper.



Gazmend Gjonbalaj, General Wesley Clark, Elena Romanova.

to whom I occasionally talk to, because this is the best. Everybody tries to do something but, you are doing better than anybody. So, this is a really vital and important program.

I try to follow events in the region and since 2014 events have not worked out so well over there. You know, when I retired in 2000, we had done an air campaign and Kosova was free. We had a bunch of troops there. I went there many times. I remember going up to the Ibar River. It was in March of 2000 and the security guys said "Sir, you can't go up to the Ibar River, your life is going to be threatened. The Serbs are up here and they're going to get you."

And you know, I watched all that take place and, honestly, it was terrible. The ethnic cleansing, especially on the part of the Serbs, on the northern side

of Ibar. And I did go to the north of the Ibar River, because they were not going to shoot me, at least not in public. Not at that time.

And I've watched this with some concern over the years. Since 2014, when Putin has become more assertive, I've watched with great concern the Eastern Europe. I've been to Ukraine. I've been in Albania. I've been in Bulgaria, Rumania. I'm doing a study for an Estonian think-tank, right now.

We need peace and stability in Europe. We don't need any country to be under someone else's thumb. We don't need any more outreach from corrupt money buying politicians, trying to change laws to suit themselves and pulling countries back closer to Mother Russia. For I know what is being attempted right now. It is being attempted through the guise of these



Organizers and participants took pictures together before the start of the event.



KAEF Committee Co-Chair Michael Hora, Sally Gotaas, Amy Manning.



KAEF Fellow, Fjolla Kondiroli.

Education is key to the future of Kosova

Kosovo America Education Fund as an example of the importance of higher education in post-conflict countries



Representatives of the Ministry of Diaspora of Kosovo - with Ylber Kryeziu at Battery Gardens.



Gazmend Gjonbalaj (left), Esad Gjonbalaj (center) and Marko Kepi (right) at Battery Gardens.

nationalist parties who preach hate and exclusivity. It is being attempted in the pay-offs to politicians.

President Obama was recently in Europe and he preached very strongly there that should not be a British exit from the EU. He visited Angela Merkel, and he gave her his support. And yes there are problems with the immigration policy. There is a lot of confusion on the Greek and Macedonian frontier and what is happening there. There is a lot of fear, and, frankly, there's a lot of mistaken ideas.

But I have worked very closely for many years with Europe. I've seen it from my first visit in Europe, in 1964, when I was a 19-year old cadet in West Point. I went back there and served a year and half in Germany in mid-1970s, for General Haig of NATO, in the late 70s. I was back in military

exercises in 1980s. I was back again with the Dayton Peace Talks in the mid-90s. And finally, as the commander of NATO. And I'm there doing business all the time. Not in Kosova, yet. We tried. And I hope we get in there to do more in Kosova. It has wonderful natural resources, great people and a great location. And I know your country is going to develop extremely well as it moves ahead. But you look around the world and you'd wish you could teach tolerance, understanding, respect and mutual respect. And stop the animosities that are so deeply embedded in Europe. It's everywhere. I've seen it in for 50 years of experience in Europe.

So, what I hope is that these young people will come over with the Kosovo American Education Fund and will study in our greatest institutions and they'll meet people from everywhere.



Gen. Wesley K Clark and Ylber Kryeziu, General Consul of The Republic of Kosova in New York.

They meet people from India and Pakistan and Eastern Europe or Africa. And they will realize that in this world we are all in this together.

There is not an iota of difference between what people want, from one country to another. It really isn't. Now, OK, I'll be honest with you, I haven't gone back to Serbia yet and maybe they want something else, but I don't think so. People are motivated by family, by personal needs and desires. They are motivated by fear. They are motivated by hope. When I travel from China through the Middle East to Eastern Europe, when I read [the news about] Mr. Vladimir Putin, I see it in a certain way. I see that there are people abroad who view democracy and freedom as an infectious disease.

You know, modern democracy started here in America. Right here really, in New York, Boston in the mid-18th century. The British weren't that bad, but they weren't Americans. They were a different continent. And they were weeks away by sailing ship. And it wasn't a revolution exactly and we didn't turn it upside down. We just had a change in the location of governments, from Britain to Philadelphia and then to Washington.

And we sent a signal around the world. People come here from all over the world. They study in our schools. They do business. They live under our laws. It's convenient. People are generally nice to each other. People blend in. And despite of their different ethnic heritage, or the way they look, or the language they speak, somehow they all become part of this country. So, I guess they are right. This concept of togetherness, growing together, diver-

sity, democracy, it is an infectious disease. People as a whole want what they see in America. And Kosova is a shining example of what can be done. It will be done in Kosova. It's hard work. It's step by step. It's learning to get along. It's learning to subordinate some personal and individual, old and new, jealousies and animosities and rivalries and working together. That's always tough for anybody in any culture. But there is something about democracy and freedom and opportunity which is culturally universal. It travels. It communicates. It sells. And the people who resist it, who fight against it, they are truly on the wrong side of history.

I am not saying that democracy is perfect. If you'd participate in American politics, I mean how can you miss it. It's the only thing you hear about. It's like a reality TV show. And that's why there is reality TV show star. It's like Survivor. They started out with 16, I'm just waiting to see it go "naked and alone".

Having said that. There is a virtue in this process. And what you see in American is a struggle to come to terms with the changing economic conditions and the changing opportunities and change in the make-up of America as people come from all over the world to live under our law and live with us. It is a good thing. It's not a bad thing. You shouldn't be afraid of it. I don't know if you are going to vote for Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump or whether you want Michael Bloomberg coming to race or something. And no one knows what's going to happen. And if you're saying you are sure Hillary Clinton is going to

win, I'd say she certainly has the international vote, there is no doubt about that. Because wherever I travel everybody says they are afraid of Donald Trump.

But the truth is that democracy is a journey and elections are as much about the process as about the outcome. And in this election, Americans, who haven't spoken up, are speaking up. In places like Indiana. In my home state Arkansas. In Rhode Island. In New York. And people are having a chance to grapple and wrestle with these issues. What is it about the economy that has people upset and concerned? GDP growth is good; unemployment is good. What is it? And that's what the political system has to resolve.

So, I want you to think about it in this way: When you are looking at politics in Kosova and you are reading Illyria and you're getting caught in it, as you know people and you know families and you know these issues, remember it's just the way the whole world works. People have different views and the whole object of the process is to be able to work together and reconcile different opinions for the common good. It is the worst form of government, except, as Winston Churchill said, for any other. You look after it, for better or worse. I think it's much for the better. And I think more than that with the assistance of the Kosovo American Education Fund as you bring these young people over and bring them back, I think you're going to set an example that resounds loudly throughout Eastern Europe. Every one of those countries in Eastern Europe wishes they can have the opportunity to do what you're doing. They can't. They're too large. They're too caught up in their past. They're too anchored on other issues. I know all those countries. You have an opportunity in Kosova that nobody else has.

And this relationship with America is a wonderful opportunity for you. It is a great feeling and a great opportunity for us, because there is something special about this relationship. I see it every time in the newspapers. I feel it when I'm with you and I think about it almost all the time. It has been the biggest part of my military career. We love you and we want Kosova to be the shining star of Europe. (...) Thank you.



American Councils President Dr. Dan E. Davidson.



Guests - with Kreshnik Jonuzi, Luti Dalipi and Delin Bixha at Battery Gardens.



During the event, at Battery Gardens.