

Western NIS Enterprise Fund

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FIVE NEW LEADERSHIP ACADEMIES TO OPEN

June 28, 2016, KYIV - The first graduation of Ukrainian Leadership Academy students took place in Kyiv on June 28th. But September brings the commencement of studies for 200 new students selected among the 1,200 applicants who applied for this program. The students will be attending this and five more new academies opening this year in different regions of Ukraine. The newcomers were initiated on the symbolic occasion – Constitution Day in Ukraine.

The objective of the Ukrainian Leadership Academy (ULA) is to develop future leaders of Ukraine. The first graduates include 39 youth aged 17-18 from all over Ukraine, including the Crimea. One year ago, after graduating from school, they were brave enough to postpone their university studies in order to seize the opportunity for learning and intensive personal development at the ULA. Their studies covered physical, academic and spiritual education and development with students pay only UAH 2000 for tuition fees. The Ukrainian Leadership Academy is financed by an investment fund – the Western NIS Enterprise Fund, which is funded by the U.S. government via the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

For ten months, the students studied in-depth logics, mathematics, financial management, foreign languages, Ukrainian and world philosophy, history, religion studies, political science, national security and communications. Lectures were given by many experts, including Yaroslav Hrytsak, Valeriy Pekar, Pavlo Sheremeta, Jaroslawa Z. Johnson, Viktor Zotov, Andriy Zelinskiy, Natalia Popovich, and Mykhailo Vinnitskiy. Students participated in several trips within Ukraine, an international study trip to seven European countries, and also made a “youth invasion” to the Netherlands before the referendum on the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement.

*"Nowadays great opportunities are appearing before Ukraine. But we are in great need of modern, effective and responsible leaders. Today 39 future leaders graduated from the Academy. This represents a small but very significant contribution to the future of Ukraine. Generating strong leaders is the key to building a strong state," said **Borys Lozhkin, Head of the Presidential Administration of Ukraine.***

Their training runs six days a week, with one day reserved for volunteer activities. They helped to weave camouflage nets, organized the clean-up of the territory, and events for children deprived of parental care. In addition, they joined the Academy-organized charity run, dedicated to the memory of Ihor Branovitskiy.

*"The first Academy was a success! We are very pleased with the results of this work. But what impresses us most is these young and inspired boys and girls. Not only the Academy, but Ukraine should be proud of them. They can make their own decisions, they are brave and they dream of a better country. No doubt, with such new leaders, Ukraine will develop and change for the better," said **Jaroslawa Z. Johnson, President and CEO of the Western NIS Enterprise Fund.***

The program organizers hope that the Ukrainian Leadership Academy experience will contribute to the reformation of state education, into which some informal study programs at ULA can be integrated. This will be reflected in the new Law “About Education” that is under development at the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

*“Unfortunately, traditional Ukrainian formal education doesn’t create values and competencies, but only transfers a certain amount of knowledge. The Academy provides those competencies you cannot gain through the formal educational system: leadership, responsibility, initiative, and creativity. I am very glad that the program is expanding and that it involves more talented young people this year. I hope that this will continue and that we will see more programs like this in the coming years,” commented **Lilia Hrynevich, Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine.***

ULA managers look to its first graduates for conveying their experience amongst their peers. Student self-government, which let them contribute to the training program planning, and also the fact that they dedicated one day per week to providing support to community needs, has helped the graduates to develop a clear understanding of personal responsibility for the development of society and their country as a whole.

*“One year ago, I graduated from secondary school and couldn’t decide what I wanted to do next, or which university or profession to apply for. I thought the Ukrainian Leadership Academy would give me more knowledge in order to make a decision. But the result was much cooler! The Academy’s program is very diverse; we were able to try virtually everything for ourselves: from sports to our own media projects. I like the teamwork and mutual support existing between participants, and also that the projects we did were useful not only for us, but for other people and for Ukraine. I am very grateful to the Academy’s teachers and inspirers for such a possibility! Now I know which direction to move in my life,” explained **Ivanna Grebenyak, alumnus.***

Create Yourself – Create Ukraine!

*The **Ukrainian Leadership academy** is a 10-month program of study for 17-18 year old secondary school graduates. Teaching is based on a combination of physical, academic and spiritual education and development. The Academy was founded in 2015 with the support of the Western NIS Enterprise Fund.*

*The **Western NIS Enterprise Fund** (WNISEF) is a USD \$150 million regional private equity fund, a pioneer in Ukraine and Moldova with more than two decades of successful experience investing in small and medium-sized companies. WNISEF was funded by the U.S. government via the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Since its inception, WNISEF’s cumulative investments total over \$168 million to 118 companies in Ukraine and Moldova. In March 2015, WNISEF launched a \$30 million three-year legacy program, funded by a portion of the profits earned from its investment activities. Focus areas include economic leadership, local economic development, impact (social) investments, and export promotion.*