

OUR MISSION

The mission of Linkages of Rochester, Inc. is to increase the understanding of the people, politics, and culture of Russia, with a focus on people-to-people relations with the citizens of our Sister City, Velikiy Novgorod, Russia.

Linkages of Rochester, Inc. is an all-volunteer organization that promotes professional, educational and cultural exchanges between our two cities. Find us on the web at <http://linkagesrochester.org> or email us at webguy@linkagesrochester.org

Linkages is part of the International Sister Cities of Rochester (ISCOR). Novgorod, Russia is one of Rochester's 12 sister cities.



Read more, donate, and get involved on our website, linkagesrochester.org, or [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/linkagesrochester)

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LINKAGES

SISTER CITIES



Winter 2015 Newsletter

President's Letter *Paul Caccamise*



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This year marks the 25th anniversary of the official sister city relationship between Rochester and Velikiy Novgorod, Russia. In 1990 a group of Rochesterians, led by City Council President, Lois Geiss, travelled to Novgorod to sign the formal agreement pairing the two cities. To commemorate a quarter century of sister city relationships and activities, the city administration of Velikiy Novgorod has invited Linkages to form a delegation to attend festivities in Novgorod in May. The celebration will coincide with the city's observance of Victory Day in Russia, an important holiday commemorating the nation's victory in World War II. 2015 is the 70th anniversary of the first Victory Day in 1945 so an exceptional celebration is planned this year. We are invited to join the celebration from May 8- 10, 2015.

We have not yet formulated final arrangements for the trip but, most likely, the delegation will spend several days in Velikiy Novgorod, followed by a few days in beautiful St. Petersburg.

If you have an interest in joining the group representing Rochester, or would like to be kept apprised of further information about the trip, please write Paul Caccamise, president of Linkages, at president@linkagesrochester.org or call or text him at 585-520-2524.

Linkages is also planning other events and activities to commemorate this year's anniversary. A special exhibit will be organized for the display cases in City Hall's first floor reception area beginning on March 2. The Novgorod City Administration has invited us to participate in a photo exchange. Linkages is also considering a Russian dinner event later in 2015. Members and friends of Linkages will be invited to participate in all these events. I hope to see you at one or more of them!

Paul Caccamise

The 22nd Linkages Education Exchange: June 23 - July

“We found the Russian dollar stores!” While in Novgorod last year, from June 20 to July 4, Linkages Education summer exchange teachers, Dr. Rosa Mazurett-Boyle and Kristen Hallagen, MATESOL, were thrilled to have found the “treasure trove” for many public school teachers in the United States. Rosa, a Spanish instructor at the Rochester Early College International HS in Rochester and Kristen Hallagen, ESOL instructor at Twelve Corners Middle School, Brighton bought items from the “37 and 39 Ruble Stores” to model ways for teachers at the Novgorod Pedagogical Training Center (N.E.R.O) to incorporate locally available teaching materials to create innovative Foreign Language/English lessons. Both Rosa and Kristen reported to Linkages that “We didn’t want them to think they could not use our lessons because they could not find the materials in Russia.” Rosa and Kristen agreed that a key element in designing the ten-day professional training was to make it easy for Russian teachers to adopt and incorporate different methods and practice. Since most Russian teachers follow prescribed lessons from state-approved English textbooks, our teachers hoped that by locating and incorporating local academic resources teachers would use alternative methods and techniques to enrich and modify existing lessons long after the ten-day summer professional training.



Kristen and Rosa brought suitcases packed with printed resources, instruction guides and independent lesson planning ideas to share with 40 Russian teachers. They also brought as well as quantities of digital reading material, visual aids, and grade-appropriate movies. Rosa’s students recorded personal reflections to share with English students in Novgorod.

For ten days, Rosa and Kristen met daily with 40 Russian teachers of English from Novgorod public schools. They provided advanced English language communicative practice and innovative foreign language theoretical and methodological instruction as ways to motivate students and enrich the subject matter. Rosa focused on the Funds-of-Knowledge Theoretical Framework for teaching world languages and cultures, while Kristen focused on the application of theory into practice. This two-pronged strategy allowed the teachers at N.E.R.O to understand the rationale for the language learning activities and to consider incorporating such work into their lesson plans using local resources.

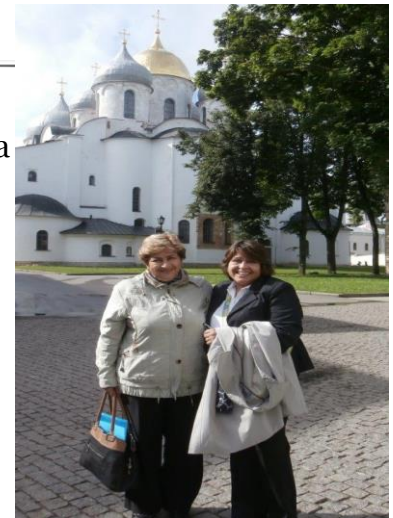
Rosa and Kristen reported to the Linkages membership at the annual August picnic at Buckland Park and to the Linkages Board at the October board meeting in Rochester City Hall. Both teachers are engaged in on-going exchanges with their peers in Novgorod and hope to publish and present at professional conferences as the results of their Russian-American exchange.

Today, Rosa and Kirsten are preparing an article for publication based on their personal and professional experiences. As a result of this exchange, Rosa is submitting a professional training proposal to the upcoming regional NYS Association of Foreign Language Teachers conference and using data collected in Russia in a seminar for pre-service teachers at SUNY Geneseo.

Continued...

Kristen, co-chair of CCER, the Rochester area Coordinating Committee for ESOL Resources, is promoting the exchange to area teachers. Kristen, whose grandparents, Betty and Paul Gocker visited Novgorod in 1990 as members of the Sister Cities delegation inaugurating the Sister Cities Linkages affiliation with Novgorod is also hosting other visitors to Rochester for Linkages Open World programs.

Linkages is very proud of the Education Exchange and looks forward to sponsoring two more teachers between June 22 – July 3, 2015. Contact Tanya R. Schueler-Choukairi, Linkages Education Committee at trsele@rit.edu for more information.



Open World Visit Postponed

In November Linkages was notified by the Open World program its proposal to host a substance abuse delegation from Novgorod in 2015 had been accepted. A delegation of five professionals connected to the field of substance abuse was scheduled to come to Rochester during the first week of March 2015. Because of delays in getting applications from Novgorod to Washington for screening and processing during the holiday season in Russia and in the US, Open World has asked Linkages to delay the group visit until the fall. The new projected date for the delegation to travel to Rochester to visit substance abuse programs and learn about the US approach to prevention and intervention in addiction services will be the last week of October. Closer to the date of the visit, the Linkages Partnership for Substance Abuse Prevention committee will recruit homes to house the five group members from Novgorod and a group facilitator. Open World candidates must be under 45 years of age, never have traveled to the US before and must be young leaders in their field. Open World is a program of the Library of Congress that brings groups of young leaders in a variety of fields from Russia and other Eurasian countries to the US to learn about US institutions, democratic practices and values.

LINKAGES' YOUNGEST MEMBER



Linkages welcomes Aaron Nicholas Coulter as its most recent and youngest member. Although they are not specifically mentioned in the organization by laws, Linkages does sponsor unanticipated partnerships from time to time. Aaron was born to Board member, Nicholas Coulter, and his wife, Tanya Klimova Coulter on December 17, 2014. Nick and Tanya met through their participation in Linkages activities in recent years. Nick went to Novgorod for the first time in 2009 as a social work graduate student. Tanya was a member of an Open World delegation that came to Rochester in 2012. They were married in 2013. Добро пожаловать в Linkages, Aaron!