

FGCU NEWS

Professor visits Moldova to help combat human trafficking

Florida Gulf Coast University College of Professional Studies professor Johnny McGaha visited Moldova in Eastern Europe in February as part of a team from the U.S. Departments of Justice and Homeland Security to help train Moldovan justice officials how to combat human trafficking. McGaha was the only non-governmental official invited as one of the team of trainers.

The Department of State has provided \$5 million to Moldova in an effort to combat human trafficking. The Center to Combat Trafficking in Persons has been commissioned to consolidate Moldovan departments that are involved in trafficking to collaborate as a task force. The purpose of the CCTIP is to bring all the officers, prosecutors and support agencies under one roof to facilitate efforts.

Moldova is a small, land locked, communist country sandwiched between the Ukraine and Romania. It is the poorest country in Eastern Europe and one with the poorest record in trafficking of women and young girls. Thousands of Moldovan women are estimated to have fallen victim to human trafficking in that country. Resistance from government agencies and corruption of officials make it difficult to work together as a task force.

"In order to help combat the horrendous trafficking problem in Moldova, the U. S. funded the new Center to teach task force development, my job was to teach the officials how to do it and what it means," said McGaha. "Other members of the team included an agent from the IRS who taught officials how to track down traffickers through financial investigations, a senior

inspector with the U.S. Marshalls taught victim/witness protection, and a trainer from the Leadership and Management Institute at our U.S. Law Enforcement Center in Georgia taught them team building."

In addition, two FGCU students from Moldova helped to prepare McGaha for the visit. Mariana Oprea is here on a special two semester scholarship to study language and culture and will be returning to Moldova in May. She volunteers in her country with an agency called LaStrada, an anti-trafficking victims rescue and protection agency. Olga Cebotarenco is a Resort and Hospitality major and must return when she graduates next year.

FGCU's Renaissance Academy seeks instructors, volunteers

The Renaissance Academy at Florida Gulf Coast University seeks instructors to teach courses in its lifelong learning program for fall 2008 and winter/spring 2009 academic terms at any of the Renaissance Academy's 15 locations throughout Collier, Lee and Charlotte counties. The Academy is also seeking volunteers for curriculum planning committees to assist with future program planning and growth.

Instructors will offer single lectures and/or short courses in art, business, computer instruction, ecology, environment, government, history, law, life enrichment, literature, music, philosophy, psychology, religion, science, sociology, medicine and U.S. and world affairs. There are no advanced degree requirements for instructors. The pay is \$75 per lecture.

Lectures are offered Monday through Saturday between 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Each lecture is usually one hour long, with additional time allotted for question and answer sessions.

The Renaissance Academy is the University's and region's premier lifelong learning program for adults, seniors and retirees. It is based on the premise that learning should never cease, that keeping the mind intellectually, creatively and culturally active fundamentally enriches and invigorates lives. Single lectures, short courses, day trips, computer classes, film series, life enrichment, and travel abroad are some of the programs offered at the Renaissance Academy. There are no exams or grades, just learning for the joy of learning with friends, neighbors and peers.

For more information contact John Guerra, director of Continuing Education and The Renaissance Academy at (239) 434-4838 or jguerra@fgcu.edu.



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