

# Newsletter

**52** The United World College in Mostar  
School year 2019/2020





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# UWC DAY AROUND THE GLOBE

*UWC Day - the annual global celebration of the UWC mission and values, takes place on 21 September every year, to coincide with the UN International Day of Peace. Each year, UWC Day is celebrated by thousands of people worldwide, including students and staff at UWC schools and colleges, national committees, UWC alumni and friends.*

UWC Day is a moment to celebrate the strength and diversity of the UWC movement and our mission for a more peaceful and sustainable future through connecting and mobilising UWCers globally. It serves as a chance to spread the word about UWC, our work and values. But it is also an opportunity to reflect on what we do as a movement, to determine how to be more effective change-makers, and to continue to challenge ourselves.

Previous events and activities have included community service initiatives, film screenings, panel debates, TEDx events, fundraising events for the UWC Refugee Initiative or for UWC national committees, outreach events held in partnership with other initiatives and a range of volunteering opportunities.

In a time in which the consequences of climate change are increasingly devastating, disproportionately affecting women and low-income communities, the UWC mission to bring about peace and a sustainable future for all becomes more



urgent day by day. While many national governments struggle to tackle the man-made climate crisis, "Generation Greta" is calling for bold action and systemic change for climate justice. UWC Day 2019 was dedicated to exploring creative, thoughtful and meaningful ways to bring about this change.

UWC Mostar marked this day with two separate events - one specifically related to the topic of 2019 - "Climate Strike 2019" which gathered hundreds of UWC Mostar and Gimnazija Mostar students who joined the climate protest. Together

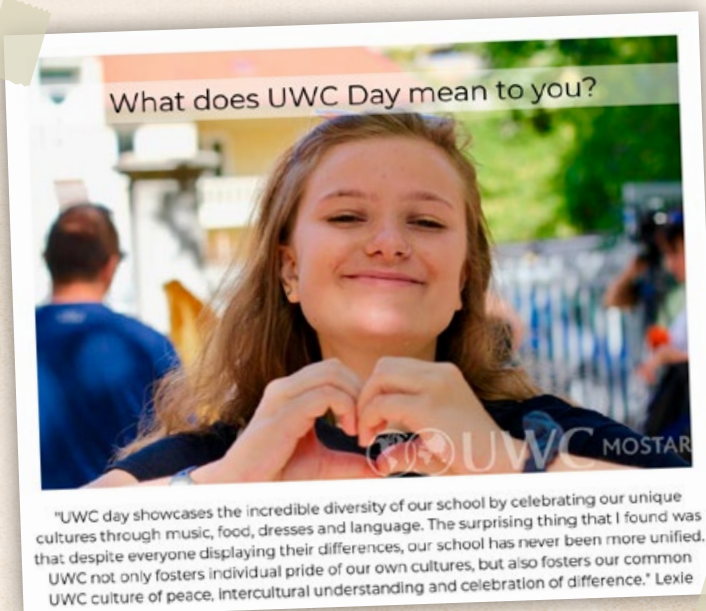
they marched through Mostar streets, demanding immediate action against climate change, trying to raise awareness about this topic. These eager, young people also motivated some of the local people to participate and support the aim of Global climate strike, but also to point out possible consequences of all the problems our planet is facing. The final activity of the event was "die-in" when all participants laid down in front of the Gimnazija Mostar building and demonstrated what will happen to the human race. No planet B!

The main event was our traditional "Around the world in 80 minutes" - an event equally loved by younger and older members of Mostar community and growing in popularity with each year. 200 students, 60+ countries, 80 minutes. This beautiful day was filled with delicious food, beautiful national costumes and songs from different cultures. We had a wonderful turnout of local people engaging with students, asking questions about their cultural traditions and experiencing the world in 80 minutes and celebrating UWC Day with us!





# UWC PROJECT - FACES OF UWC DAY



## WELCOMING MR SHELBY DAVIS TO UWC MOSTAR

UWC Mostar community had the honour and pleasure of welcoming Mr. Shelby Davis in the beginning of October.

Mr Davis was accompanied by Mrs Gale Davis, Ms Mary Ann McGrath, Ms Erma Rech and Ms Melissa Bingler and in addition to attending the Assembly and visiting our student residences, they also met with the staff and enjoyed lunch with UWC Mostar students and scholars.

The Davis United World College Scholars Program is the world's largest, privately funded, international scholarship program—supporting more than 3,100 undergraduates from 164 nations.

The program was launched in 2000, providing grants to selected American colleges and universities (off-shore campuses and affiliates are ineligible) to support United World College graduates who matriculated at these schools. The first schools in the pilot group were Colby College, College of the Atlantic, Middlebury College, Princeton University, and Wellesley College.

We are truly grateful and happy to be able to have had the opportunity to welcome Mr Davis, but also to have Davis scholars here with us in Mostar.

Founders Shelby Davis and Phil Geier: If you could bring thousands of talented students from every corner of the globe to US colleges and universities you could create international understanding and change the world.





# "BRIDGE OF STORIES" - A SUCCESS STORY ON THE 1<sup>ST</sup> EVER UWC PODCAST

*"Our podcast's name is Bridge of Stories, aiming to bridge people together through story-telling. Why "bridge"? The Old Bridge (Stari Most) of Mostar was built after the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina of 1995, with the intention of connecting the divided peoples of this city. Our podcast also aspires to accomplish that. Roaming around the streets of this once-divided city, we are hopeful and we are dedicating concrete work to our hopes: to build a bridge connecting the young, the old, different, races, occupation, with stories from the whole world without the filter of media. Just the purity of voices."*

Michelle YuXin Wang from China and Antek Hasiura from Poland, both in the Class of 2020 at UWC Mostar, are adding a personal touch to foreign news headlines.

*"Studying here at UWC Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina with 200+ students and staff from more than 90 countries in the world, we are exposed to stories from every corner of the world, every second of the day. And from the most authentic sources - how many people can say they learnt about what happened in Syria in 2011 from someone that was standing on the balcony, watching the protests unfurl? Yet, so many of these stories easily got lost in conversations, and there was no platform for releasing them out into the wider world. We believe in the power of media and that it is capable of sharing the universality of the UWC values: thus we are making this podcast, to record those fascinating stories, and share them with you, the world."*

The resulting podcast is titled "Bridge of Stories". It has the aim of bridging stories from all around the world together to promote peace and understanding, just as the famous Old Bridge in Mostar intended to. Since launching the podcast earlier this year, they have recorded 16 episodes covering stories from all around the world, past and present, from the legacy of World War II in Austria to the first ever Pride parade in Sarajevo.

When asked about the impact that the UWC experience has had on Michelle and Antek, the access it has allowed them to the diverse lives and experiences of their fellow



students at UWC Mostar, and the opportunities for growth that this provides on a daily basis, has been the greatest take-away for both. And it is this experience which they are sharing with the listeners of their podcast, by adding a personal twist to current affairs that usually only reach us in abstract form, clouded by the distance that lies between the journalists reporting on events and the countries affected by them:

*"Every week, we invite people from different corners of the world to talk about issues happening in their countries. Every episode, we learn something different, and we hope our audience does too. If we take the example of the episode with our Venezuelan co-year, who told us how back home they cannot find milk in the supermarket, how his family survived a week with absolutely no electricity, and how highly-educated school teachers are even fleeing to earn money as prostitutes. Or then there was the episode with Engy from Syria, who described the bombs that formed the backdrop to her hometown and how a mere two hours after an attack, people would return to the site, determined to start living again. Hearing about headline news from those directly affected allows you to debunk your assumptions and shifts your perspective. In a time where we are confronted by a constant influx of information from tons of media sources on a daily basis, we felt it was time to give the public a media platform that offers them a chance to hear from the most original voices."*

Although UWC students remain the dominant voice that is represented on the podcast, in recent episodes the team have also interviewed Dr. Pilvi Tost (UWC Adriatic, 1993-1995) from Finland, who is the Chair of the Education in Action Foundation and one of the founders of the United World College school in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the celebrated psychologist Professor Robert Bor on his work on mental health and major UWC patrons, Shelby and Gale Davis.

While reflecting on the lessons "Bridge of Stories" has taught them so far, Antek and Michelle agree that it prompted them to ask "what exactly are the implications of international relations and what kind of roles do the young generations and UWC play in these complex issues?" And the answer they have arrived at is: "We inspire. All our interviewees stated how they are inspired by the UWC movement, a movement that gave them a chance to embrace the outside world."

It is this sense of inspiration that Michelle and Antek want to share with you, their listeners, as well as future generations of UWC Mostar students to ensure that the podcast, and the bridges that it builds between the stories from far-flung corners of the world, can have long-lasting effects.

You can listen to past and future episodes of the "Bridge of Stories" podcast on their Facebook page, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Overcast, Anchor, Breaker, Pocket Casts and Radio Public.

## British Ambassador at UWC Mostar

*UWC Mostar had the pleasure of welcoming the UK Ambassador in BiH, H.E. Matthew Field and Deputy Ambassador Ruth Wiseman.*

The event in cooperation with UK Embassy and H.E. Ambassador Matthew Field took place at UWC Mostar premises and the purpose of this event was to further the cooperation and explain the role of the British Embassy in BiH and to engage and discuss with young people their views on the current and future challenges they face, and how this might shape our future work.

This event is a part of a series of engagements the British Embassy is undertaking in Mostar today, in an effort to bring the Embassy closer to the people. The topic of the round table was "UK and Mostar - the path ahead".

In addition to UWC Mostar students, the event was attended by Gimnazija Mostar and SPARK team.

Commenting on the event, UWC Mostar's Acting Head Dženan Hakalović:

"This is a great honour. We have British students at the college and we are very well introduced to the work of local embassies, and our students are very interested in their impact but also the progress of BiH towards EU".

H.E. Ambassador Matthew Field stated that he is happy to be in Mostar and able to show interest and hear about the priorities and needs of the citizens of Mostar.



## Board meetings and new members

Students and staff had the pleasure of welcoming our Board members this October. As the part of the programme, UWC Mostar students and staff attended the presentation on UWC Mostar's history by Dr Pilvi Torsti, Chair of the Foundation Education in Action and one of the founders of the UWC school in Bosnia and Herzegovina. College Board members also spent time with our students and staff, marked the UWC Day and joined our journey around the world in 80 minutes.



Presenting Board members in the academic year 2019/2020: Jasminka Bratić, Chair; Ivan Lorenčić, Deputy Chair; Jasmin Hodžić, member; Augusta Campagne, member; Sandra Ann Thomas, member; Darko Gligorovski, member; Robert Hilliard, member; Fleur Meijs, member; Mirna Doyle, member; Andrew Bennett, member; Sead Filipović, member; Sonia Rawat, member.



# Challenge History 3 - React for the Future

The very first Challenge History Summer School 3 – "React for the future" follow-up activity took place in Kakanj, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The activity was aimed at high school students from Bosnia and Herzegovina and it was organized by CH3 alumni.

The daily agenda was composed of short presentations by CH3 alumni, followed by "Prevention of brain drain" workshop with three speakers, Ermin Mašić, Nejra Neimarlija Roić and Aldin Čatić, successful young people who have decided to build their lives, families and businesses in their homeland.

"Challenge history 3 – React for the future" summer school which took place in July this year in Ohrid, North Macedonia, brought together high school students from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro and North Macedonia.

Together with War Childhood Museum, UWC Mostar is one of the project partners from Bosnia and Herzegovina.



## October College Fair

Many interested students attended the traditional College Fair at UWC Mostar where 10 colleges and universities presented their programmes. Among many interesting segments, the Fair introduced students to the characteristics of US higher education, tips for writing an application essay, but also provide an opportunity for individual meetings.

Thank you to Colorado College, St. Olaf College, The University of Oklahoma, St John's College, Earlham College Whitman College, Wartburg College, Washington and Lee University, Bennington College, Harvey Mudd College.



## Šantić Residence News

United World College in Mostar – a melting pot of 70 nationalities and cultures and a lighthouse for education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is continuing to grow, with your support.

With the goal of achieving greater financial sustainability and providing optimal living conditions for our students, UWC Mostar has been actively pursuing to buy properties around the city of Mostar and turn them into new student residences. Owning property can save between 40% and 70% of annual housing costs compared to the current status of renting and contributes to the reconstruction of Mostar.

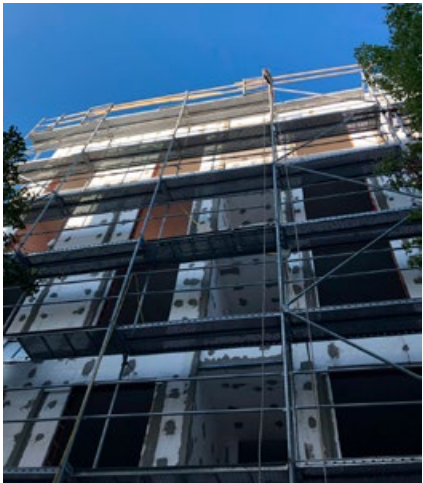
Our first student residence "Mejdan" was completed in 2014 and is currently

housing 37 students. We are very excited to now have secured a new site with very close proximity to the Gimnazija building.

Five years ago, when the first residence was open, the institution continued the realisation of its plan for the construction of new facilities for accommodation and wellbeing of students and staff.

The new residence for students from more than 30 countries will be located in the Šantić Street and will carry the name of the great poet Aleksa Šantić.

The construction works are in full swing, and according to the planned dynamics, the new residence will open its doors in 2020.



## UWC Mostar contributing to the reconciliation process in BiH

OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomed UWC Mostar's PR Coordinator Adla Velagić-Čurić together with representatives of the Coalitions Against Hate from all over BiH at the workshop in Sarajevo dealing with the topic of social media and increase of visibility of the social cohesion activities.

Aim of these workshops is to strengthen capacities of the Coalition in promotion of activities aiming at public condemnation of hate incidents and strengthening capacities in their fight against hate and prejudices in the society.

The Super Citizens initiative, under which the Coalition operates, was launched by the OSCE Mission to BiH in 2013 with the aim of contributing to the reconciliation process in Bosnia and Herzegovina and UWC Mostar has been a member and supporter of the Coalition since 2015.





# EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS' NIGHT FOR THE SIXTH TIME IN MOSTAR

*UWC Mostar partnered with European Researchers' Night this year too and was a part of the organisation of this fun science night for the sixth year in a row! European Researchers' Night 2019 was organised in 9 cities in BiH - Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Mostar, Bijeljina, Brčko, Goražde, Konjic, Tuzla and Trebinje.*

European Researchers Night, the annual festival of science and scientific achievements, organised in over 350 cities across Europe, is being celebrated in BiH in 9 cities across the country. Traditionally, European Researchers Night is organised on the last Friday of September, as a refreshing change to a routine Friday night out, and is dedicated to interactive experiments, workshops, quizzes and lectures, all in an effort to promote science and engage young people to consider a career in science.

Gianluca Vannini, Head of Operations Section for Social Development, Civil Society and Cross Border Cooperation, underlined that events like European Researchers Night prove that science is not only important but that it can also be interesting and fun: "I am very happy to see that there are more and more young people and BiH cities joining us each year. I am sure you will enjoy the events and find an interesting variety of interactive and fun activities prepared for you tonight."



Science and research contribute to a country's development, and lead to job creation, which is why the European Union is supporting these events through Horizon

2020, our largest programme for research and innovations".  
The slogan of the event was "Let's STEAM! Stvarajmo nove prilike", in cel-



bration of the creative side of science, as well as the creative process implied by scientific work, underlining that European Researchers Night is an opportunity to meet and get to know extraordinary people who work in these areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Thousands of citizens gathered in 9 cities across the country for this fun, scientific night in Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Brčko, Goražde, Konjic, Mostar, Sara-

jevo, Trebinje and Tuzla, and participated in rich educational and entertainment programmes designed to bring science and innovation closer to visitors, present scientific achievements and results, and spark the imagination with various interactive experiments, presentations, quizzes, projections and entertaining games for all ages.

European Researchers Night is an event held throughout Europe under the Euro-

pean Commission's initiative since 2005, as part of FP7, currently the Horizon 2020 programme. European Researchers Night has been held in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2012. The aim of the event is to raise awareness of research and innovation in the country, support researchers and promote the achievements of local scientists, innovators and entrepreneurs, encouraging young people to consider science a potential career.





# MUN Conference connecting the region



UWC Mostar Acting Head Dženan Hakalović attended the first strategic meeting of organizations that work on implementing MUN conferences in Bosnia and Herzegovina, hosted by Sarajevo Model UN.

The organisers expressed their aim of setting a path for regular coordination meet-ups in order to achieve synergistic action towards achieving a greater impact.

Model United Nations (also Model UN or MUN) is a conference format that aims to simulate the procedures of the United Nations. Students participate as "Delegates" to various UN Committees and other bodies of the UN system. Participants research and formulate political positions based on the countries' actual positions.[1] Model United Nations was formed from the Model League of Nations.[2]

As of 2012, there were an estimated 400 MUN conferences worldwide and we are all looking forward to another bigger and better MUN in BiH in 2020!



## Commendation Prize for UWC Mostar's student

UWC Mostar is immensely proud of our student Leyi Lyu for her amazing achievement in winning a Commendation Prize for her essay in Global Politics! Her essay was selected among 885 other essay entries received from 68 countries. The John Locke Institute encourages young people to cultivate the characteristics that turn good students into great writers: independent thought, depth of knowledge, clear reasoning, critical analysis and persuasive style. Essay Competition invites students to explore a wide range of challenging and interesting questions beyond the confines of the school curriculum. All essay prizes are judged by senior academics from the University of Oxford.

# UWC MOSTAR STUDENTS FINALISTS OF THE ZAYED SUSTAINABILITY PRIZE 2020

*UWC Mostar students have been selected as the FINALISTS of the Zayed Sustainability Prize 2020!!!*

Addressing some of the world's most pressing and core development challenges, and aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, the finalists of the Zayed Sustainability Prize 2020 range across five categories: Health, Food, Energy, Water, and Global High Schools.

Our team was selected as one of the finalists in the category of Global High Schools. The specific category represents

six world regions, with each winner receiving up to USD100,000.

The UAE's pioneering global award for recognising sustainable and humanitarian development, has a total of 76 winners who have, directly and indirectly, impacted over 318 million lives since the Prize was established in 2008. This year, in its twelfth annual awards cycle, the Prize received a record 2,373 entries from 129 countries.

With an annual awards ceremony, held each year during Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week, the Zayed Sustainability Prize acknowledges and rewards pioneers and innovators who are committed to developing and accelerating impactful solutions and building a lasting legacy, today, for the future generations to come.

Congratulations and good luck in the finals to our very own: Joseph, David, Danuta, Karoline, Laura, Sophia and Petr.





# UWC MOSTAR PRESENTS MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION CAS

## Members: What does photography mean to you?

"For me photography means telling a story. A story that can not be told by words. Behind each photograph there is a story and by freezing that particular moment we reveal how rich the moment truly is.

Photographs have the ability to tell a story from nothing, and that story changes from one individual to the other. For me that is the most important. To spread the photo and let everyone interpret it in their own way.

Aaron Siskind, an American photographer once said; "Photography is a way of feeling, of touching, of loving. What you have caught on film is captured forever... It remembers little things, long after you have forgotten everything."

-Benjamin Selimotić '18 - '20

"Photography gives me the opportunity to snap a spectacular moment in my life. I love the way people smiled naturally in front of the camera. There is something very special about not spending forever taking multiple shots to get the perfect shot. Photographing is more about the way how you capture the memory, not about capturing the most beautiful view."

-Beck Hung '19 - '21

"I have two habits that I've been keeping for more than 7 years- taking photos and writing. Both of them are documentary, it's just that photography is wordless, but sometimes an image is more than a thousand words. It's a visual way to keep and tell stories. It also helped me go through hard time- it's the only way that I could calm down and talk to myself. Even till now, photography is still the best way for me to communicate with myself, to find peace within me."

-Yixin Wang '19 - '21

(mentored by UWC Mostar PR and Communications Coordinator Adla Velagić-Čurić)





# Warm welcome to our new Staff Members in 2019/2020

UWC Mostar welcomes 10 new staff members in the academic year 2019/2020



Zoe Hammel - Mathematics



Laura Gonzales Mantecon - Biology



Hannah Schroder - English



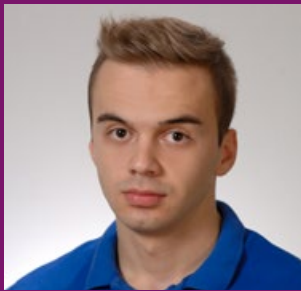
Rens van Lieshout - History TOK



Adela Ramović - Psychology



Amina Hodžić - Mathematics, Physics



Belmin Šehić - College Nurse



Adi Maksumić - College Nurse



Selma Popovac - French language



Iva Marinović - Administrative Assistant



Anja Kresojević - Volunteer



UWC Mostar Staff, School Year 2019/2020.

# UWC Mostar Alumni Give Back

We are excited to share that over the last 6 months, the Alumni Board has made a push to increase alumni participation in the 1 Euro donation campaign by promoting the campaign and its purpose to more alumni. Through our efforts and the alumni's desire to

give back to school, over just the last few months, we have managed to increase the number of our donors by 42% and bring our total annual donations to over €10,000. We are incredible proud of these results and our alumni who chose to support the school €1 at a time!

We are very grateful to every single one of our donors and we would encourage even more alumni to sign up! Please join your fellow UWCiM alumni in giving back by signing up through the Mostar Endowment website (<http://mostaren-dowment.com/alumni.html>).

# Harvard Impact Study - Thank you!

A huge thank you to the 244 (22,2%) UWC Mostar alumni who completed the Impact Study Survey. We were one of the top 8 UWCs with most alumni participation!

In total, more than 6,000 UWC alumni participated and we made history by collecting one of the largest data samples on the educational experience from an international high school.

What's next? 250 interviews will be conducted in the coming months and the UWC Impact Study Report will be published in 2021 -- we can't wait to share it with you!



# New & Improved UWC Hub

Join the 2751 alumni already in the new and fresh UWC Hub today and get in touch with the worldwide UWC network! The new features include:

- Features countless jobs and internship opportunities within the UWC Network and beyond
- A group dedicated for CouchSurfing Improved mentoring tab to find the best people to give you advice on your academics or your career
- Ability to create your own photo albums

Join the UWC Hub today!

